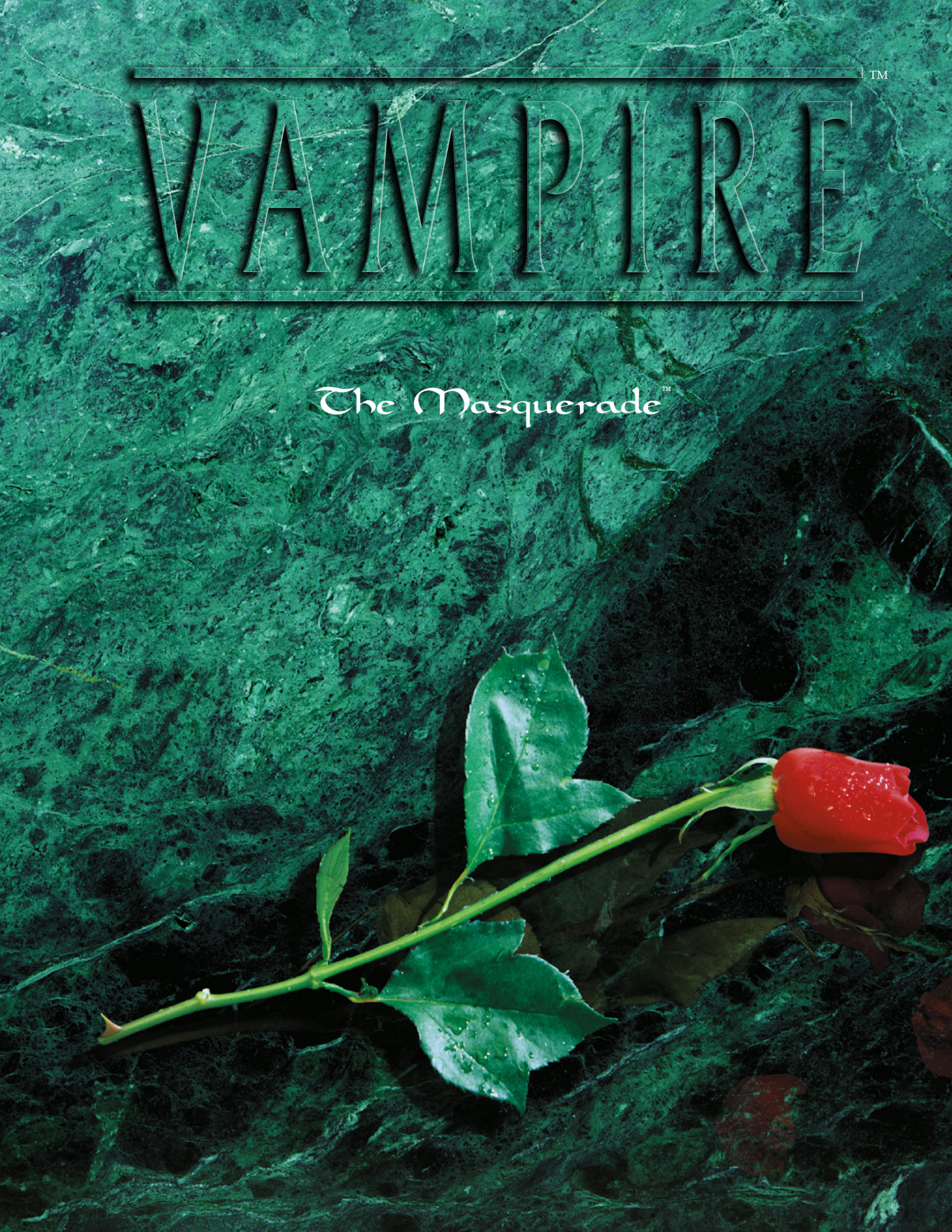
VAMPIRE™

The Masquerade™



Vampire™

The Masquerade

By: Mark Rein•Hagen

Vampire™ uses the Storyteller™ Game System

©1991 by White Wolf. All right reserved. Reproduction of this book in any manner without consent from the publishers is prohibited. Players may reproduce the character sheets for personal use only.

Credits

Design: Mark Rein•Hagen

Written by: Mark Rein•Hagen, Graeme Davis, Tom Dowd, Lisa Stevens, Stewart Wieck

Development: Mark Rein•Hagen, AndrewGreenberg, Stewart Wieck

Editing: Stewart Wieck, Lisa Stevens, Stephan Wieck

Design Contributors: Lisa Stevens, Chris McDonough, Josh Timbrook, Nicole Llndroos, John Brandt, Brenda Stiles, Tom Dowd, Graeme Davis, Timothy Carroll, Stephan Wieck, TraviS Lamar WilliamS, Ben Rhoades, Aaron Voss

Art: Tim Bradstreet, Chris McDonough, Ed McKeogh, Ron Spenser, Richard Thomas, Josh Dmbrook

Layout Design: Nicole Lindroos

Production: Nicole Lindroos

Cover Concept: Chris McDonough

Cover Photograph: Mark Pace

Calligrapher: Kurt Cagle

Playtesters:

The Succubus Club: Josh Timbrook, Chris McDonough, Brenda Stiles, John Brandt, Nicole Lindroos, Mark Rein•Hagen, Stewart Wieck, Andrew Greenberg, Lisa Stevens, Ann Nappo, Seth Tepher, Stephan Wieck, Kelly Golden

The V-Team: Jeff Berry, Guy Wells, Gail Starr, Mark Matthews-Simmons, Christopher Lancaster, KC Lancaster

The Book of Eibon Club: Stacia M. Bannan, Dmothy Carroll, Bryan A. Case, Michael Coyne, Shane D. Harsch, Steven Kaye, Edwin Nealley, Laurel Schippers, John Schippers, Robert G. Schroeder, Lowell Brandt Stouder Jr., Richard Wu, Kin Yee

The Fun Connection: Andreas Mitterlechner, Stefan Kovalovsky, Ralph Schlmpl

Dedication: This game is dedicated to Vaclav Havel, Poet, Playwright, & Statesman —who was its inspiration.

"We are still under the sway of the destructive and vain belief that man is the pinnacle of creation, and not just a part of it, and that, therefore, everything is permitted.... We are incapable of understanding that the only genuine backbone of our actions — ifthey are to be moral — is responsibility — responsibility to something higher than my family, my country, my firm, my success. Responsibility to the order of Being. where all our actions are indelibly recorded and where, and only where, they will be properly judged."

—Vaclav Havel,
in a speech to the United States Congress

Attention: *Reader discretion is advised. The themes and issues described in this game may be disturbing to some and distasteful to others. Though our purpose is not to offend, our use of the Vampire as a metaphor andas a channel for storytelling may be misconstrued. To be clear. Vampires are not real. The extent to which they may be said to exist is revealed only in what they can teach us of the human condition and of the fragility of the splendor which we call life.*

A special thanks to the following:

Anne Köhlhofer and Andreas Wichter for that very first Vampire game session.

The city of Gary, Indiana.

Artist Models: Skot Lee Willson, Dean Carlson, Tommy O'donnell, Clay Thompson, John Ganser, Denise Devorak, Denny DeBourbon, Joel SUntan.

Artist Models Photographer: Kevin Braasch

© 1991 by WhileWolf. All rights reserved. Reproduction without written permission of the publisher is expressly denied, except for short excerpts for the purpose of reviews. Players may reproduce the character sheets for personal use only. WHITE WOLF Magazine, Ars Magica, The Challenge, Campaign Book, Storypath Cards, Whimsy Cards, Vampire, The Order of Hermes, The Stormrider, Jumpstart Kit, Covenants, The Broken Covenant of Calebais, The Tempest, Saga Pack, White Wolf Adventures, Dark Foe, Faeries, Bard's Son & Battle Cry, Chicago By Night, Storyteller's Handbook, The Camarilla. The Last Supper, The Hunters Hunted, A World of Darkness, Who's Who Among Vampires, Storyteller, The Masquerade, Mythic Europe, Blood Bond, The Succubus Club, Ashes to Ashes, Storyteller's Screen, Alien Hunger, Werewolf, Magus, Faerie Ghost, and White Wolf are all trademarks and copyrights of While Wolf. Shadowrun is a trademark of FASA Corporation. Warhammer Fantasy Roleplay is a trademark of Games Workshop Ltd. Star Wars is a trademark of Lucasfilm, LTD. Star Trek is a trademark of Paramount Pictures Corporation.

VAMPIRE

The Masquerade

The Damned 6

Book One: The Becoming 16

Explaining the concepts, storytelling, the game rules and creating characters.

Chapter One: Introduction 19

The Book of Nod 28

Chapter Two: Rules 31

Chapter Three: Character 41

Book Two: The Hunger 64

The use ofcharacters: how to define them, and allow them to interact with the story.

Chapter Four: Traits 67

Monsters, Monsters Everywhere 111

Chapter Five: Development 113

Chapter Six: Drama 137

Book Three: The Riddle 165

Describing the role ofthe Storyteller, advice on how to create a setting and run a story.

Chapter Seven: Setting 167

Chapter Eight: Chronicle 201

Chapter Nine: Storytelling 227

Epilogue: The Release 253

Index 260

Nosferatu (nôs' - fer - ă - to͞o)

January 3rd

To W.H., from your most devoted servant.

Many years have passed and I fervently hope that time will have dulled somewhat the distressing memories you carry. I dare to send this in a spirit of supplication; although your forgiveness is too much to ask, I crave at least your understanding. I owe you some kind of explanation for the events which shattered your blameless life.
And, I admit, I do this also for myself. Your learned friend was only partially right – I am more than simply that. Although I exhibited precious little Mengyschwart before you and your companions, the flame of Humanitas still burns in my breast, albeit erratically. Time and nature both struggle to extinguish it, completing my descent into the Inferno of madness and bestiality. Then I should truly become that which he described in his book. I must guard my soul well – as well as any priest – for any lapse in vigilence lets in the Beast, with results which you yourself have seen.

I know it is impossible to atone – an eternity of pious prayer is too short a time. But, as a mark of penitance, I lay before you the enclosed document, which act makes me a traitor to mine own kind. I pray that you may find something in its pages to help you understand the torment I inflicted upon you, and by understanding, perhaps, dispel some little amount of the pain. The tone, I fear, is somewhat dry; a soldier has little need for pleasing tricks of poesy to beguile a reader. I have merely set down that which I know, as well as I may.

In parting, may I presume to render my condolences on the regrettably death of your husband, which news I read in the Times of London. Your love for him is only too well-known to me. If the prayers of such a creature may be of any comfort, know that you have mine.

I owe you a debt that can never be discharged. If, at any time, I may be of service to you or your family, I am at your command.

Semper servus,
V. J.

The Damned

The Origins of the Kindred

Like mortals, we have our own history and lore, by which we seek to explain our existance and understand our place in the world. Just as the veracity of your legends is lost in the shrouds of history, so is the truth of our lore uncertain. However, over the years I have unearthed a number of different sources, and by comparing and contrasting them, I believe I have arrived at some semblance of fact and truth.

Most of our lore is contained with in an ancient text known as the *Book of Nod*. Neither I nor any of my acquaintances has ever seen or heard of a complete copy, although fragments have been published over the centuries, *multis linguis*, *multis causis*. There is much confusion and contradiction, and some versions appear to have been deliberately falsified.

Over the centuries, I have been fortunate to peruse fragments in Greek, Turkish, Aramaic, Latin and *Hebraica Quabalistica*, as well as translations from Old Kingdom hieroglyphics and Assyrian cuneiform. Inconsistencies are rife, but the main burden of the tale is that my kind is descended from Caine, whom some call The Third Mortal.

Outcast from mortal society for the killing of his brother, Caine was cursed with eternal life and a craving for blood. We, his children, are the heirs to that curse, condemned to repeat his crime endlessly.

Caine wandered in the wilderness until his name was all but forgotten. He returned among mortals and was able to establish himself as the ruler of a city, named Enoch, Uniech, Enkil or what you will. Many Kindred call it the First City. Here, Caine created three progeny — those whom we call the Second Generation. They in turn begat the Third Generation, who are numbered at nine, twenty-seven, one hundred or not at all, according to the source one reads. Caine forbade the creation of any further Kindred, perhaps having gained some understanding of what he had unleashed upon the world. There is no word of Kindred establishing Caine's rule elsewhere, and if they all remained in the First City, their increasing numbers must have strained the mortal population.

All was tranquil in Caine's domain until a great flood destroyed the city. Caine saw this as divine punishment for returning to the world of mortals, and resumed his wanderings, leaving his Progeny to their own devices. Though he forbade them to create more, they ignored his imperative as each of his Progeny desired a Brood of their own.

No more is heard of our ancestor, although from time to time, a Vampire calling himself Caine will appear in some part of the world or another. Occasionally, he is revealed as an imposter, but more often he vanishes as suddenly as he appeared. Some believe that Caine still lives, while others — myself included — think it more likely to be some subterfuge of the Elders. It is said that Caine is rent with sorrow for having unleashed such misery and suffering upon the world.

Once free of Caine's restrictions, the Second and Third Generations created a great multitude of Progeny. They ruled together briefly, but all was not calm between them. Eventually, the youngest Generations rose and slew their Sires, drinking their blood. This Fourth Generation built another great city (some sources hint that it might have been Babylon, while others suggest that it rests somewhere beneath the sands of Egypt), which we know only as the Second City.

The rule of these new Vampires was not untroubled, for certain Kindred of the Third Generation still lived. Indeed, some say they were secretly behind the slayings of their Elders. It was made known that they alone reserved the right to beget Progeny, and any of the Fourth Generation who disobeyed them were hunted down and killed, they and their Sires with them. Though the Fourth Generation lived in public, the Third Generation, which we know today as the Antediluvians, lived in secret and revealed to no one the location of their Havens. For nearly two millennium (some say 23

centuries), the Fourth Generation ruled the city, while the Third Generation ruled them. Eventually, the culture grew decadent and the city died. In a great uprising, the people rose up and killed all the Kindred they could find.

When the Second City fell, its rulers fled. Scattered far and wide, they were too numerous and too widespread for the hidden Elders of the Third Generation to threaten them, and thus was beget the Fifth Generation. The Kindred grew in numbers and settled in all parts of the world.

Mortal history records a time, starting over two thousand years ago, of burgeoning empires locked in combat with one another — the time of the Persians, the Greeks and the Tartars. Thus did the Fifth Generation establish its own order. Meanwhile, the Antediluvians lay hidden and pursued their own mad schemes. This age of wars may even have been of their making, the beginning of their great Jyhad. Whatever the truth, there remains almost none to speak of it. I myself have met only one of the Fifth Generation, and at the time I did not know it.

It is said by some that near the end of this period, the Antediluvians emerged from their hiding places and sucked the blood of all my kind, each leaving but one Progeny of their line. Legend has it that this was the close of the Second Cycle, because the Antediluvian lust for blood was so great that they needed all of my race as their Vessels.

Those who believe in the Cycle legends predict a great Armageddon. They say that the Antediluvians are asleep now, but soon they will awake and then they will feed. The Third Cycle is coming to a close, and none but the Third Generation will remain alive at its conclusion. The believers say that each Cycle lasts 2300 years, and soon, very soon the time approaches. They call it the Gehenna, and some Clans prepare for it fervently. As a man of science, this seems extreme to me.

Whatever the truth of the matter, I know that the Elders of the Fifth and older Generations are in complete seclusion. Those of the Inconnu fear one another that much. To have lived this long, they must be cunning and powerful, and they may be expected to cover their tracks well. This leaves my own Sixth Generation and its descendants as the bulk of the visible Kindred. I have heard claims of a Thirteenth or Fourteenth Generation, but prefer to dismiss them. Such creatures must be very weak and close to mortality, for it is said that the Blood thins as it is passed from one Generation to the next.

The Masquerade

In 1435, there was founded an organization, a cause, an obsession, a war. Call it what you will; history knows it as the Inquisition. Besides burning harmless old women and excommunicating French field mice for eating farmers' wheat, this Inquisition did betimes achieve its aim, and cleansed the world of no few true witches, warlocks and monsters. Many such monsters were Kindred, and the diligent Inquisitors traced whole bloodlines and put all to the flame.

For the first time, our kind stood in real danger of extinction. Superstitious belief coupled with scientific thoroughness placed in mortal hands the wherewithal to rid the world of monsters forever. It was a terrifying time — as fearful as the great Holocaust which mortals visited on one another earlier in this century. Those Kindred who survived bear the mental scars of the Inquisition to this day, and many live a life of paranoid seclusion, dealing with the breathing world as little as possible.

Before this time, we had lived more-or-less openly, relying on our power and position to preserve us. Though we did not announce our presence, we did not struggle to hide it either. We had grown proud in our strength, and the fall which followed was terrible indeed.

The survivors quickly learned the wisdom of stealth and secrecy, and networks sprang up as they do among mortals in times of crisis, conveying information and individuals *sub rosa* for the safety of all. This was the birth of what may by called a Vampiric society.

The name *Camarilla* arose for these organizations, reflecting the small, secret rooms used for meeting and concealment. Groups made contact with one another, united for the first time by this adversity.

The first global convocation took place in 1486. Many chose to absent themselves, but this meeting gave itself the power to speak for all Kindred existing or yet to be made, and to pass laws governing all. The first such law — and the only one to stand to this day — is that of the Masquerade. It is this law — the first and most sacred — which I willingly violate by laying these pages before you.

The horrors of the preceding decades had taught us the need for secrecy and shown us that, after all, we

were vulnerable. It was vital, therefore, that the breathing world be convinced it had killed the last of us, or, better yet, that we had never existed at all. We must match organization with organization and cause with cause, if we hoped to survive.

The Masquerade had two faces, each with a number of contingencies and lesser objectives. *Imprimis simplicissimusque*, reasonable secrecy and care was required of all Kindred. Nothing must betray our continued existence, and any individual who broke this secrecy would be outcast and hunted down as a danger to all.

Secundus, active steps must be taken to change the character of mortal society, and direct minds away from superstitious thoughts. Many of the Kindred had turned to scholarship to beguile the lonely decades, and certain matters were made available to the *Taggänger* in the fields of alchemy, literature, art, geography, cosmology *und so weiter*. Many mortals were already turning their steps in this direction, so the task was not unduly arduous. Names spring to mind such as Bacon, Dee, Galileo, Copernicus, Ariosto, Michelangelo, da Vinci, Cellini, and Columbus. It was a brave Age we made.

With so many fresh discoveries clamouring for attention, the mortals lost their single-mindedness in chasing monsters. A little later — principally thanks to an alliance of French Clans — material and political philosophies were influenced. Science had bred Reason, and Reason denied monsters. Over the following centuries, we were able to crush superstition almost, completely. No one of any education seriously believed we had ever existed.

Adjustments continued over the decades — a war here, a discovery there to keep breathing minds focused away from us. We have had a hand in some of the most significant events in history. But do not think that all your history is our work, for marionettes you are not and have never been. Marx was of your kind, and no Vampire could have formulated his thoughts. Brief decades later, monstrous deeds were performed in Europe, but none of my kind were involved. Those monsters were entirely your own.

Not long ago, mortal minds turned once more to the mystical — though the greatest mystery to me is the appeal of the music which was born of those days — and superstition briefly took the ascendant. The knowledge of certain chemical substances was made available, and many inquiring minds were distracted or forever silenced. And throughout this last century, steps have been taken to preserve the image of the Vampire in popular entertainments, for thus it may be seen more clearly as a fiction. The Masquerade is unraveling, as the mysticism of the mortals increases. The Camarilla is at war to turn back the tide — the evidence of that is all around you.

Childer

Comical as it may seem there is a generation gap amongst Vampires as much as there is in mortal society. The younger Vampires — mainly those made in the latter half of this century and those of the most recent Generations—include an element which chafes at the restrictions of Kindred society and laws. Like rebellious teenagers, these "Anarchs," as they call themselves, demand their freedom and ignore the effects on the rest of their kind. They would create their own Broods without restraint, deny the authority of Princes, break the laws of the Masquerade, and do a hundred other things which would force the knowledge of our existence upon the mortal world.

The Elders, and many other Kindred, do not take kindly to this attitude, and in some places a virtual state of war exists between them. Some see this as a sign of the end of the current Cycle, and speak of our imminent extinction.

These Anarchs do not believe that they are being told the truth by the Elders, and they know that they are not being told all about their situation. The Elders do not trust the Anarchs, fearing that these Ancilla seek to slay them.

On the Nature of Vampires

Where to begin? So much ink has been spilled down the centuries. We are monsters to thee, yet heroes too. We are the incarnation of dark metaphors and suppressed desires, yet we are also the nobility of faerie tales, beloved of children. We are a baseless superstition, an artistic genre, a psychological condition, a yearning made flesh, an externalization of a guilt-lust-violence complex, and many other things beside. To you we have become many things.

I am constantly amazed by the regularity with which mortal writers stumble across truths and half-

truths—sometimes very profound ones — by the most haphazard and fallacious thinking; and then, unaware of what they have uncovered, they proceed to expound generalities in completely the wrong direction.

Some two and a half centuries ago, a French churchman named Calmet sought to collect all the information *extant* on the nature of Vampires. It is not surprising, then, that his treatise contains many contradictions and areas of uncertainty. Quoting from the reports of Papal Commissions sent out to deal with 'plagues' of Vampires in Austria, Hungary, Moravia and Silesia, he reports that a Vampire may be destroyed by being transfixed with a wooden stake, followed by decapitation and the burning of the remains. This will indeed destroy a Vampire, just as certainly as it would destroy a mortal. Such a clever man, Calmet.

Motion pictures have abbreviated this treatment somewhat, creating the fallacy that the stake is sufficient. Do not believe such tall tales. Impalement on a stake will immobilize a Vampire, but some further treatment is necessary *terminus sit*. Whether this be burning or sunlight, *ist egal*; but trust not the stake alone. Neither should you place your faith in weapons of metal, as did your American friend. Such things injure, but the wounds heal quickly — else I should not be writing now.

Sunlight, it is said, is infallible doom to the Vampire. Motion pictures show motley greasepaint Vampires crumbling to dust at Sol's caress, or bursting into flames like Greek Fire. Sadly this is true, if somewhat overstated. Sunlight burns our skin as does flame, and only the oldest and strongest can withstand it for long. I myself have not seen the light of day in many centuries, and have nearly forgotten the gleam of the sun's golden rays. But I do not miss it.

Crosses, holy water, and the other trappings of religion may be ignored—the Church is the first refuge of mortals faced by things beyond their comprehension, especially in former times. *Ipso dicto*, however, I have seen rare occasions where such items were capable of causing considerable discomfort—their wielder almost glowed with faith in the Divinity, and I can only conclude that the religious items served somehow to channel the power of that faith. But ignore the tricks of the cinema with their crossed candlesticks and shadows of windmills sails.

Likewise garlic, aconite and other herbs. They repel Vampires no more than they do mortals, for all the canting of the goodwives who peddled them. Like the Church, the village wise-woman was oft required to use her 'magic' against Vampires, and was just as successful.

Running water affects us not at all. We no longer breathe, hence we cannot drown. While being trapped underwater is unpleasant and may, if prolonged, result in some physical deterioration, no Vampire has died of immersion alone, although one Clan is rumored to have a weakness *vis-a-vis* water. Belike this is how many of the rumors originated, for weaknesses have arisen in several bloodlines and been passed down from Sire to Get.

The cinematic Vampire, it seems, may take several forms if the human shape suits not his purpose. Wolf, bat, mist — in some folklores, cat and night-bird also. The powers of the Elders are considerable, and they are seldom revealed to those of newer Generations. I have seen many wonders during my brief and unwilling involvement in their game of Jyhad, and I no longer discount the stories of shape-shifting. But I tell you this — a Vampire who has plural forms will either be of a rare breed, the Gangrel Clan, or will be very old, very wise and Very powerful. I pray that such a one will never cross your path.

Many Vampires, however, have abilities which a mortal would consider to be supernatural. As predators, our senses are sharp, and some have developed other abilities to aid us in the hunt, abilities of the kind discussed by M. Mesmer. The ability to inspire fear, stillness, obedience and other feelings is a useful one, although popular writers have extended it somewhat in the interests of their stories. In dealing with mortal kind, my powers of Domination have proved most necessary.

It occurs to me that some of the confusion about a Vampire's supernatural powers and weaknesses may be due to mistaken identity. There exists a class of creature in between mortal and Vampire, which the Kindred have named Ghoul. It is not the legendary corpse-eating *ghûl* of the Indies, although certain individuals may display similar behaviour.

A mortal who drinks the Blood without first being drained will become a Ghoul. These creatures may go abroad in daylight as other mortals do, but they do not suffer the Hunger, nor do they age so long as they feed on Vampiric blood regularly. They may even have superhuman strength and reflexes. From time to time, it is advantageous to create such servants, commanding their loyalty through the promise of eternal life. And they need not be human — a hound which has drunk of one's Blood becomes the most perfect and faithful guardian one could desire. Thus do tales of hell-hounds arise.

While the Ghoul displays some of the strengths of the Vampire, it retains most of the weaknesses of the

mortal. Impalement will slay a Ghoul as effectively as a mortal, and a silver bullet will kill as surely as a lead one. They may even develop a fear of religious trappings, or garlic, or what you will — a purely neurotic phenomenon, based on the fact that they *believe* these things can harm them. And the existence of Ghouls in animal form may go some way toward explaining the widespread belief in shape-changing Vampires.

Some Ghouls may well believe themselves to be full-fledged Vampires, having been deceived to that end by their creators. They may even act according to their mistaken ideas — to the point of drinking blood — for they seldom know the truth of the Kindred any better than mortals. Most are deranged to some extent by the experiences they have suffered — witness, *zum Beispiel*, your late husband's employer — and many are deliberately misinformed by their masters, the better to serve them.

The Embrace

Mortal superstitions deal at great length with the means by which a Vampire may come into existence. These range from the predictably religious to the utterly bizarre, and can make an entertaining evening's reading it one is so inclined. But other than entertainment, they shall serve you little purpose.

Firstly, and most commonly, the myth has it that anyone bitten by a Vampire will themselves become a Vampire. Thus, each time a Vampire feeds, it creates another of its kind. One wonders how it is that any mortals are left in the world. Further, a corpse may become a Vampire if it was a suicide, an oathbreaker, a member of a tainted bloodline, or *de tout* an evil person. Again, the globe would be peopled with nothing but Vampires—and I tell you this, I have not seen this army of undead.

Indeed, by my understanding, there are not many of us upon this globe. If fact have it, there is only one means through which a mortal may become a Vampire. Shame fills me again when I recall that I intended this fate for you, and I rejoice that Providence denied me. Truly do I repent the eternity of sorrow which so nearly was your destiny.

There is a grain of truth in the legend *de gustando*. To become a Vampire, one must lose all one's mortal blood — but that is only part of the horror. *Mortui exsanguinati mortui veri*, if nothing further is done; the fang will kill as everlastingly as the blade or the bullet.

As mortality stands on the brink of extinction, as the flesh slowly dies, the Vampire assailant may choose to spare the victim from death or deny Heaven's grace, for all is one *his rebus*. By replacing the stolen mortal blood with a little of the Vampire's own, a Progeny is created. But a single drop of blood upon the lips of the dying arouses them sufficiently to drink from the wrist of their Sire.

How can I express the horror of the Embrace? The fear and confusion? The revulsion and terror? The Pain. Even the passing of centuries has not dulled the memory.

Understand that I am no coward. As a soldier, I endured the privations of the camp, the perils of battle, the savagery of the victor, of which I plead guilty to my share, for such was the *Zeitsmode*. But even those things I witnessed as a prisoner of the Turks could not have prepared me for the experience of being hurled into this cursed half-life.

I was, *de gratia potestates descriptis*, in a most peaceful state of mind as my blood was stolen. As deaths go — and I have seen many kinds — this was surely the least distressing. It was as though my experience were a strange and somewhat unsettling dream. Far off in the warm, soft darkness of my failing mind, I became aware of a light; I knew that this was where I must go, and I knew that, once I arrived there, all would be well with me. I began to drift toward it.

Abruptly the welcoming light was extinguished. My face felt an impact like a musket-ball, and as I tried to scream, my mouth filled with liquid fire. The vitriol seared my throat and stomach; consciousness returned as though it would rend me limb from limb. A thousand fish-hooks tore my flesh in every direction.

I prayed for death — anything to stop the pain — but could not even lapse from consciousness. *Nec Turcos*, *nec Inquaesitores* ever commanded such torment. Magnify a thousandfold the sting of vinegar on a cut finger, and flood the feeling through every limb and every vein. Add to this the gnawing, starving ache of five days' forced march without food nor water. Deny sleep, swooning or any other surcease from the all-consuming*dolor*, But no. My meager wordsmithing can convey nothing of it.

I knew only that I must drink, and as I did so the pain abated some little. My eyes cleared, and I saw what it was that I drank.

My first reaction was denial. This could not possibly be happening. Even in the fifteenth century, men of education and breeding scoffed at the superstitions of the peasant. As a child, my nurses had frightened

me to sleep with stories of the terrible *vrolok*, but I had outgrown such tales long before. This was a nightmare, a hallucination of some kind. I tried to focus on thoughts of meat, fruit, wine—but to no avail. Blood was all. Blood was reality. All else was discarded.

I can only be thankful that I was in a remote place. Had I been made in a city, with people all around, there is no telling what havoc might have ensued. The Hunger blotted out Reason entirely. Had my own son appeared before me then, he would have died to feed the Hunger, for I was utterly enslaved to it. No opium fiend in a Limehouse or Shanghai den was ever so helplessly, so wretchedly dependent.

I cry for mercy. The memory — and the recollection of what followed — distresses me, and I shall not continue the narrative. Instead, I shall address a new, but related, topic.

Anatomia Vampirica

Though our outward appearance remains much like that of the living, there are those among us who insist that the Embrace brings its subject into another species — *Homo Sapiens Sanguineus*, *Homo Sapientissimus*, and *Homo Vampiricus* have all been advanced as names for this new race, following the Swedish classification.

Be that as it may, it seems beyond dispute that the body undergoes as much of a change as the psyche. As will become apparent, much of what follows is — and can only be — conjecture, unsupported by dissection. The Resurrection Man would have slim pickings among our kind.

The gross physical changes are a matter of common knowledge; so much so that we have allowed them to remain in popular fiction. The canine teeth are indeed long and pointed, the better to draw blood. However, they are only fully extended at the time of the kill, being at other times withdrawn into their sockets by the contraction of a flexible tissue at their base. Both speech and secrecy would be most difficult otherwise. Some lack the means to withdraw their teeth, but they are easily discovered, and are a dying breed.

The skin, as with the cinematic Vampire, is invariably pale. Partly, it seems, this stems from our aversion to sunlight, but partly also it is due to our arrested state of death. *Darüber noch später*.

The Hunger is a drive for food, of that there is no doubt. From this, and from bitter experiences with the foods I most enjoyed in my breathing days, it appears that the inward parts of the Vampire have lost their facility for digestion. One seldom sees a stout Vampire, and nearly all remark on a new-found slenderness after the Embrace. Being no longer required, the organs presumably wither.

The Vampire's body remains as it was at the time of death. Hair and nails continue to grow for a few days, as they do on a fresh cadaver, but that is all. If I wish my hair or nails to be shorter, I must cut them each evening after I rise. It is my conjecture that the body of the Vampire is actually dead, and is only arrested from the natural process of decay by the power of the Embrace. The skin becomes a little tighter over the bones, much as it does in the newly dead. If the body is injured, it will reform itself to the same mold again and again.

The body no longer makes and replenishes its own blood, and relies entirely on prey for fresh blood and the nutrients which Science has found blood to carry. Something in the Blood of the Sire, passed down at the Embrace, fans the spark of Life and arrests decay, but regular infusions of fresh blood are needed lest decay begin again. And when a Vampire is destroyed, that decay is fantastically swift, as though Time were recalling the debt of decades or centuries. Nothing remains but dust, which is why anatomy is impossible and so much must be guessed.

The lungs of a Vampire no longer breathe — though many have learned to feign breathing while among the living — for the fresh blood of the prey provides the small amount of oxygen needed to sustain the dead tissues in their stasis. Only a young or foolish Vampire takes blood from the jugular vein, where it is near the end of its journey and full of impurities; the blood of the carotid artery is clean and wholesome, and much to be preferred.

Just as the lungs no longer breathe, so the heart no longer beats. The blood of prey must somehow suffuse through the body by a process of osmosis, rather than flowing along veins and arteries. This can be seen in the fact that when a Vampire weeps — which indeed we do, and more often than a mortal might suppose — the tears themselves are of blood. Cut a Vampire's throat, and you will find the vessels empty. The closure and atrophy of those blood-vessels nearest the skin is another reason for the paleness of aspect which marks the Vampire, although a rosy hue is noticeable after feeding.

The blood of the prey, coupled with the Blood of the Sire, does appear to have some remarkable

properties. We are able to heal ourselves of most wounds with remarkable quickness. We still feel pain, and a reflex sends blood to the afflicted area — just as in life blood will suffuse bruised tissue and colour it purple. The one exception to this rule is the stake so beloved of writers and film-makers. This will induce a kind of paralysis or trance, although it will not kill in its own right. Quite why this is so is unknown to me, for the heart no longer beats and so is not necessary to the flow of blood. I have heard various mystical explanations of this phenomenon, but must confess myself at a loss to explain it rationally.

One last question remains *in re corporis* — a somewhat prurient one, which I shall answer with as much delicacy as I may. Through the popular entertainments, the Vampire has become established as a highly potent figure of romance — and betimes of more than romance. While the act of love is physically possible for a Vampire of either sex, the associated impulses, drives and responses have died along with the flesh — which, incidentally, is cold to the touch rather than warm. By effort of will we may go through the motions, forcing blood to the relevant areas in the same way as healing a wound, but that is all. The ecstasy of the Kiss replaces all such needs within us.

The Hunger

To live as a Vampire is to live with horror. Always squatting on one's shoulder like a warlock's fiend is the knowledge of the Hunger. And always, does it approach — sometimes slowly and surreptitiously, sometimes with great haste, but always ravenously. The Hunger can never fully be satiated.

Hunger, we call it, but the term is woefully inadequate. Mortals know hunger, even starvation, but this is as nothing. The Hunger replaces almost every need, every drive known to the living — food, drink, reproduction, ambition, security — and it is more compelling than all of them combined.

More than a drive, it is a drug, one to which we are born with a hopeless addiction. In the taking of blood lies not only our survival, but also a pleasure beyond description. The Hunger is a physical, mental and spiritual ecstasy which throws all the pleasures of mortal life into shadow.

To be a Vampire is to be trapped by the Hunger. The Beast may only be kept subdued by the greatest effort of will; to deny the Hunger enrages the Beast, until nothing may keep it in check. Thus we must commit monstrous acts to stop ourselves from becoming monsters — that is the Riddle. *Monsters we are, lest monsters we become*.

That is the paradox of our life. It is the curse of my own.

Madness

The Beast rages constantly for release, and only the strongest will may hold it back. Sometimes it breaks its bonds, and runs riotous until it is recaptured. The strain of self-control, and the shameful memories of failed control, are hard enough to bear. Worse still is the knowledge, constant as the Hunger, that these things will surely happen again. Over the decades and centuries, this awareness gnaws at the mind like a rat at a ship's cable.

To be a Vampire is to live on the edge of madness. Obsessive devotion to some self-appointed task can help keep despair from the mind, and if the task is one of great goodness, it is possible to reason that the end justifies the means. Some deliberately cultivate addictions, such as gambling or collecting art. Others shut themselves away and confine their hunting to a small, sparsely-populated area, telling themselves that they are protecting the rest of the world. These things can perhaps delay the onset of madness, but they can also provide it with its first foothold.

Ultimately, hard, as we may strive against it, madness awaits us. The flame of Humanity burns lower and lower, until finally it is extinguished. Then, the Beast is victor, and we truly become monsters. The Beast resides within the heart, and directs us towards evil, but when it overtakes the halls of the soul, then shall we *be* evil.

Some speak of *Golconda*, the Vampire's Salvation. Both mortal and Kindred lore deny us Heaven's grace, but in Golconda we look for surcease from the Riddle. It is a stasis, where an individual may balance the Man and the Beast against each other so that striving is no longer needful. The descent into madness is halted, and although the individual is no longer recognizable as human in his thoughts and deeds, what remains of *Humanitas* is safe. In almost five centuries, I have met a meager few Kindred who have reached this blessed state, but all desire it as mortals desire Heaven.

Time

We are, as the most cursory student of folklore knows, ageless and immortal. In this case, lore and tradition have the right of it. Once made, a Vampire lives until actively destroyed, or until the Beast wins over the Man, or until, after countless millennia, the Blood is exhausted.

Down the centuries, mortals have hungered for the secret of immortality, thinking that it would give them great power. From the priests of heathen times, through the alchemists of my own breathing days, and down to the physicians of the present, mortals have expended more wealth and effort in the war against aging and death than in the cause of any religion or trade.

Many newly made Kindred — myself included — rejoice in the thought of immortality when they first overcome the shock of the Embrace and begin to reconcile themselves to their new situation. Yet it is a barbed gift, and another door by which madness may enter in.

Consider, for example, having to watch your loved ones — even your children and grandchildren — grow old and die, while you remain strong and vigorous. There is a necessity to live completely outside mortal society, or at least to move on every decade or so, lest it be noticed that you do not age. The tide of history flows over you like a stream, leaving you unchanged.

The longer one lives as a Vampire, the greater the sense of detachment from mortal affairs. It can be an advantage at first, helping to deaden the guilt of killing and the pain of losing one's mortal family to remorseless Time. But as detachment grows, Humanitas wanes and the Beast grows stronger. The most terrible of mortal serial killers often are detached from their kind, *atrocitates tranquilliter gestandae*. It is the same face on a different coin, as the Turks would say.

Even if one can fight off this dehumanizing *verschiedenskeit*, Time lends madness other weapons. For without detachment, guilt and remorse may work unchecked, eating at the feelings like acid eating metal. Mortal soldiers return from foreign wars wounded by the violence they have seen and done, yet they have only to live with their memories for a few brief decades. A Vampire's guilt is eternal, and time can sap the strongest will. Another face of the Riddle. We may lose our Humanity to avoid losing our minds, yet what is madness but lost Humanity? *Sooner or later*, grins the Beast, *you shall be mine*.

A further paradox — we grow stronger as we grow weaker. The older a Vampire, the more powerful — the more cunning to have lived so long, the better versed and practiced in certain arts and powers, the better able to withstand those things that are anathema to us. And, perhaps, the stronger of will, not to have become a monster. Yet the weaker, for the Beast tries the bars of its prison ceaselessly, and in time they must yield. The oldest shut themselves away from the rest of their kind, fearing the day when they shall become monsters and distracting themselves with paranoid games of cat's-paw using younger Kindred as playing-pieces.

Vita Sub Tenebras

There are other reasons for our nocturnal life besides the need to avoid the sun's rays. It is so much easier to stalk and hunt in the hours of darkness. *Imprimis*, the prey is usually dulled by fatigue — and betimes drink — and can see little in the poor light. The hunter, on the other hand, is normally fresh and fully rested, and can often see as well as a mortal does at noonday. *Secundus*, the hours of darkness are less populous, and promise fewer interruptions. Feeding is a vulnerable time; the Beast is near the surface, and may not stand at bay rather than leave a kill. This has been the undoing of more than one Neonate.

The World of the Vampire

On one level, the world of the Vampire is the world of mortals. A Vampire moves in the world of mortals much as a nobleman moves in the forest of beasts while hunting. Just as the noble has his castles and courts, however, so the Vampire has a world of his own, where he may consort with his own kind.

Some Vampires shun the society of their Kindred, but such society exists, running parallel to mortal society in both place and form. Just as there are mortal rulers and mortal societies in the world's great cities, so too there are Vampire Clans and Princes.

It would be fatuous to list and describe every Clan, Prince and Fief in the world. Suffice it to say that every mortal city of any size supports a Vampire

population, and these populations are organized in a number of different ways. Some rule collectively, others autocratically, but all rule and all resent intrusion. Like organized criminals and law enforcement agencies, they have built their Domain to their pleasing and dislike anything which threatens to disturb their peace.

Accordingly, a Vampire who enters a new city is required by *höflichkeit* to make himself known to its rulers and satisfy them that their rule is not threatened or challenged. To fail in this courtesy is to invite war. No witch-hunter ever pursued his prey so diligently as a Clan or Prince seeks out a stranger *nouveau arrivé*.

Most Kindred seek Princedom, for it is the only means by which to create a Brood of one's own. Princes do not often allow others to create Progeny, and even if they do, they are allowed to create only one. As Prince, you may create as many Progeny as you wish and their loyalty adds to your strength.

Most rulers, I have said, are content to keep the peace in their Fief and pursue their own arcane ends. But there are exceptions. One is the league of Clans which calls itself the Sabbat, or the Black Hand. Their Fief extends widely across the eastern half of North America, and they are everything that mortals expect of monstrous Vampires. Revelling in the violent, the perverse and the bestial, they are shunned by their own kind, and woe betide the incautious Vampire whom they find in their territory.

Above the Clans stands the Camarilla. All Vampires are aware of this league, and all are invited to join. To take an analogy *ex mundo vivantis* — if a Fief is a regional or national government, then the Camarilla is the League of Nations. To my mind, it is equally effective, but some set great store by its infrequent convocations. Certainly the Elders of the Council are not to be underestimated as individual powers — most are very old and all are very powerful. Primarily it enforces the ancient Traditions, most important among them the Masquerade, so soon enough I may have cause to test its resolve and strength.

The Clans all have their various alliances and oppositions, which shift as often and widely as those of the small countries of the mortal world. I have mentioned the protocols which must be observed when entering a Fief as an outsider. These obligations and structures are no more than protocols, and may be broken from time to time; but there is a stronger bond — stronger even than the ties of blood kinship — whose *auctoritas* is absolute. It is the relationship we call the Blood Bond.

I have touched upon the power of Blood to create new Kindred and Ghouls. Its effect on Kindred is no less powerful. It is said to be the sweetest tasting blood in the world, but it creates a potent bond between donor and drinker. A Vampire who drinks another Vampire's blood on three separate occasions, undertakes a blood kinship as strong as that between Sire and Get; in fact, many Sires force this bond upon their unknowing Get at the time of making, the better to command their loyalty. Among the Kindred, the Blood Bond is a most potent bond; to take the Blood Bond is to give over one's mind and heart to another, and a willing Blood Bond is never undertaken lightly. If all else fails and you have no other means of defence against a Vampire, use my name — the chance is slender, but if your attacker happens to be Blood Bonded to me, then you shall be safe.

Diablerie

By now, if my labours have been equal to my intent, it will be apparent to you that the society of the Kindred is as diverse as that of the living. We have our princes and paupers, our dreamers and men of action, our heroes and criminals, our idealists and our perverts. The matter I am about to disclose is little more than speculation, but increasingly I am inclined to believe the rumours.

I have said how the Blood of the Sire empowers the blood of the prey, so that the body is sustained in its unlife. According to rumour, the Blood of the Sire loses this power with the passing of centuries and millennia, and an exceptionally aged Vampire must needs drink the blood of Kindred to survive. Although the decay of a mortal cadaver is spared us, time still takes a toll, and the Blood is not absolutely immortal. A young Vampire of an early Generation is able to subsist on the blood of animals, but as the centuries pass—or as the blood thins with transmission — first animal and then mortal blood loses its ability to sustain.

The Antediluvians are said to prey on the Kindred as we do on mortals, and there is no end to the stories of their depravity. Increasingly, though, rumours spread of younger Kindred doing likewise. The reason for this is unclear. Perhaps the youngest Generations bear so little of the Blood that it serves them only for a few centuries; or perhaps they seek the powers of the Antediluvians by imitating their ways. I have long wondered if these be the cause of the war amongst my kind, the Jyhad which has lasted so long. The Antediluvians hide, for they fear that they will be killed by those seeking their Blood and thus their power.

The Elders fear the Anarchs, for they fear that they shall be eaten by them as well. The Anarchs fear all those who are older than them, for they know that they are prey to a most deadly predator. The conflict between my kind is a cannibalistic and horrific war indeed.

I have already mentioned the Blood Bond, which is undertaken by drinking the Blood of another Vampire (usually one's Sire or Prince). It is known that taking the Blood of one's own Get carries no such bond, and it seems also that the Antediluvians — and those others who habitually prey on their own kind—are able to do so without creating any kind of bond or obligation. This fact, more than anything, makes the practice of Diablerie (as it has come to be known) a shocking and perverted thing to the Kindred, and any Vampire who is a known Diabolist may be killed out of hand by any who find him. The Diabolist must hunt with care, for he stalks the most dangerous game in the world. Doubtless some find a great exhilaration in this existence.

The Elders, needless to say, deny these rumours absolutely. To admit to such things would incite a revolution as terrible as the rising of the Fourth Generation. Yet there is evidence, which the diligent can find though the Antediluvians cover their tracks ever so carefully.

Last Plea

My discourse is at an end; my treachery complete. By now, I hope you will understand in some measure what impelled me to those acts I shall always rue and why I felt it necessary now to place this document before you. I cannot ask for your forgiveness — my crimes are too great. But if there be pity in your heart, pray for me.

You now know more about my kind than any mortal living — aye, more even than your friend the professor when he sought to destroy me. The use to which you put this knowledge I leave to your own conscience.

I have changed a great deal since we last met. For many years thereafter, I sought within myself for I know not what. Now, I believe I have found it, or am about to. If Golconda be truly within my reach, I may endure, for in the depths of introspection which prompted my writing, I found a desire for *quietus* at any price. That was a partial reason for my discourse. I know full well that the knowledge I have imparted could lead to the destruction of myself and my kind. The will to live — if life this be—is too strong in any Vampire to allow for a more direct suicide.

Whatever you decide, I wish you and yours well. I have followed the career of your son Quincy with great interest, and the lives of his children also. I rejoice that Fate stayed my beastly hand and ensured the welfare of your fine family. What a great comfort they must be to you.

You shall hear no more from me unless you wish it. I say again, my service is yours to command. I can be reached through the personal columns of any major European newspaper.

Adieu.

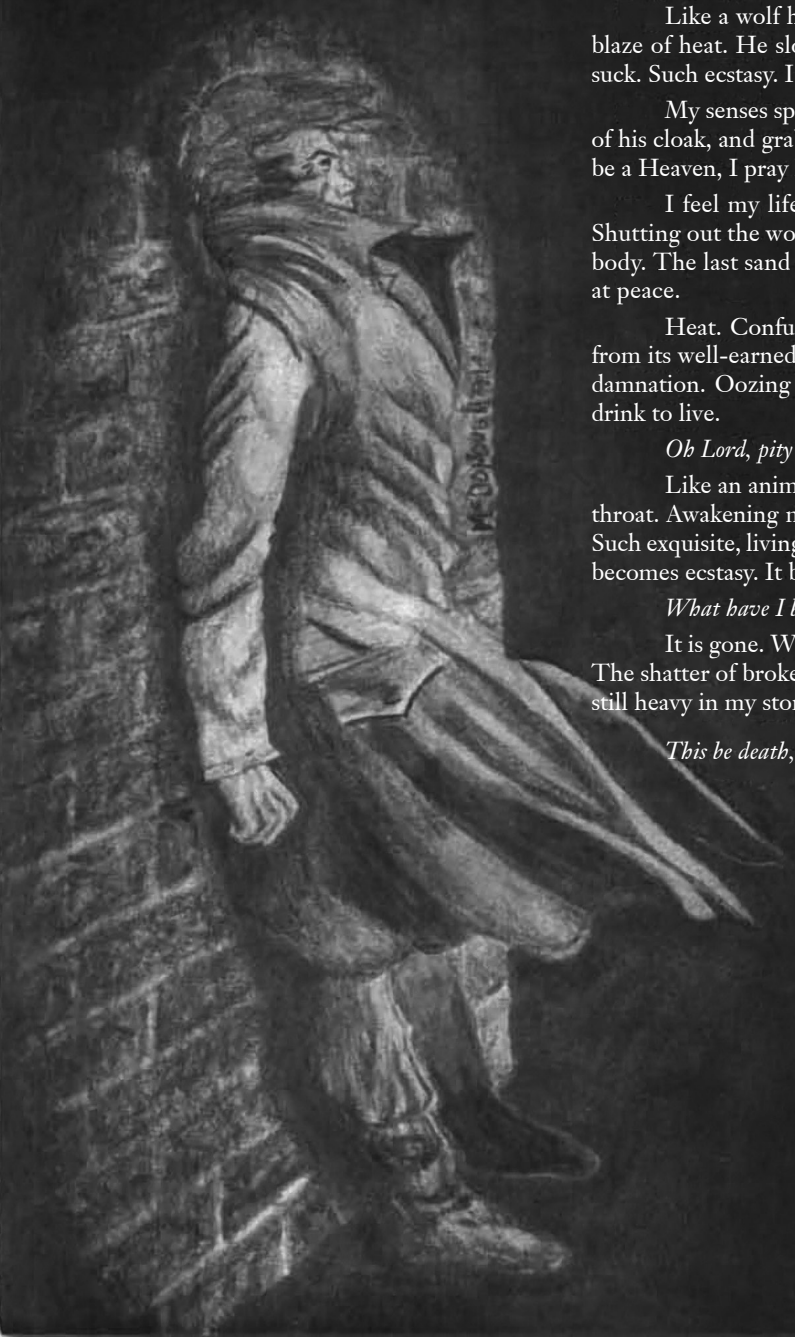
Your most devoted and penitent servant,

V.T.

Now, reader, I have told my dream to thee;
See if thou canst interpret it to me
Or to thyself, or neighbor. But take heed
Of misinterpreting; for that, instead
Of doing good, will but thyself abuse
By misinterpreting evil issues.

–John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*

Book One: The Becoming



Those eyes. Like the pits of damnation. Like orbs of black steel. Those eyes. I stare into them and I am lost. My mind screams for release. Fear, Panic, Flight. But my body does not respond. I cannot move. His caress lingers on my face for a moment and then his fingers slowly travel down to my neck. His eyes, so gentle. They provide me no mercy.

Who is this thing? Am I to die?

Like a wolf he pounces. His fangs rake across my throat and pierce my skin. A blaze of heat. He slowly licks at my essence as it pours out of my neck. He begins to suck. Such ecstasy. I cling to him like a drowning sailor, like a lover. My rock. My lust.

My senses spin into the night, reaching out for solid ground. I catch at the lapel of his cloak, and grab hold. The tearing of the cloth, the surrender of my soul. If there be a Heaven, I pray I go there soon. If there be a Hell, I know I am there now.

I feel my life slipping away. With my eyes blurring, I let out one last moan. Shutting out the world of darkness and pain I rise up. I leave my twisting and heaving body. The last sand falls through the hourglass. The pain leaves. It is calm here, I am at peace.

Heat. Confusion. I can smell the bitterness. The fragrance wrenches my soul from its well-earned rest. He holds his wrist toward me. I gaze upon my salvation, my damnation. Oozing life, its red gleam beckons to me. I know but one thing, I must drink to live.

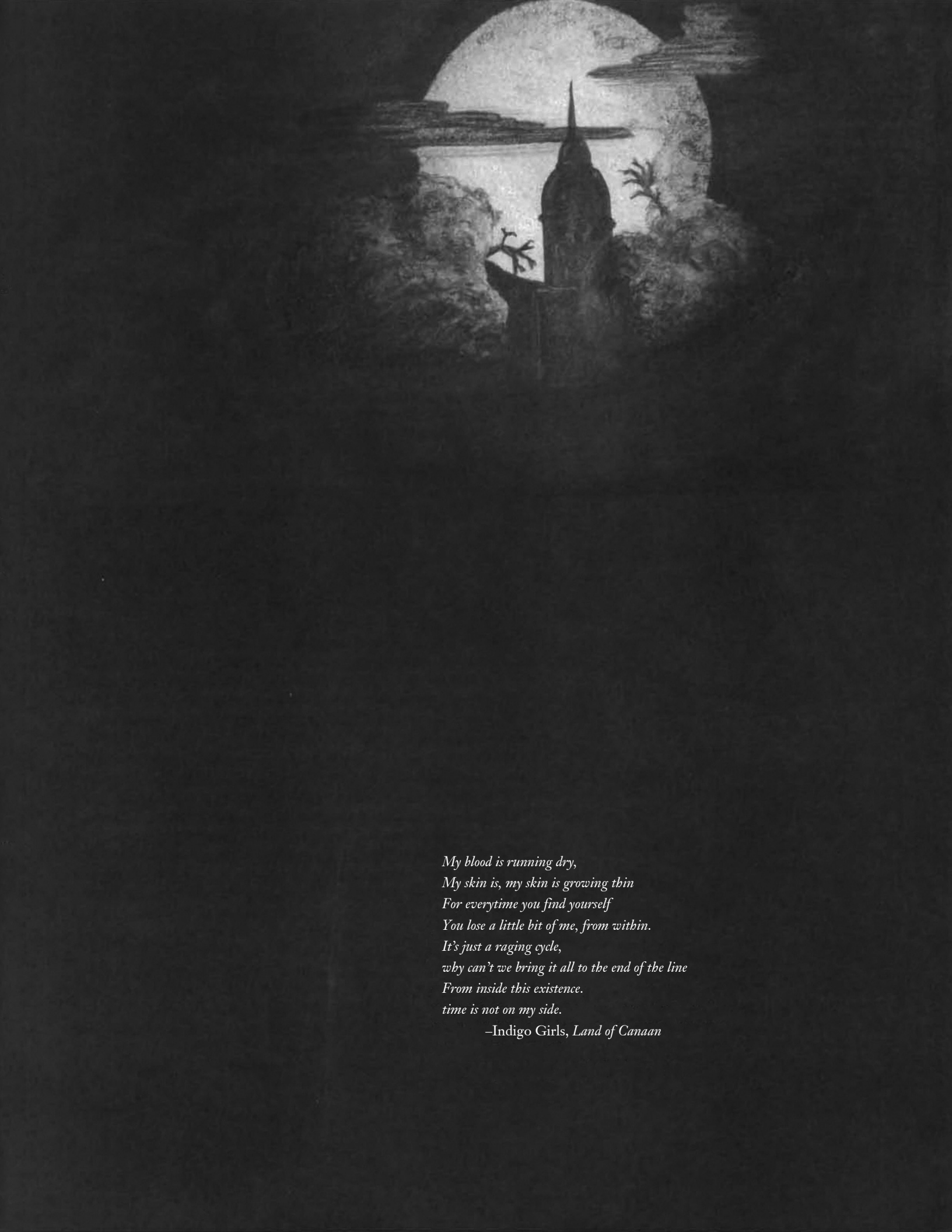
Oh Lord, pity me!

Like an animal, I lunge. Greedily I suck at his skin. The hot liquor caresses my throat. Awakening me. I welcome its warmth. Nerves given up for dead spring to life. Such exquisite, living agony. I try to scream. The life flow continues unabated. The pain becomes ecstasy. It becomes my existence. We become one.

What have I become?

It is gone. With a cry, I grasp wildly for the source of life. I collapse to the floor. The shatter of broken glass sounds somewhere nearby. I am alone. With the gift of life still heavy in my stomach, I sink off into the realm of dreams.

This be death, the unmaking.



My blood is running dry,
My skin is, my skin is growing thin
For everytime you find yourself
You lose a little bit of me, from within.
It's just a raging cycle,
why can't we bring it all to the end of the line
From inside this existence.
time is not on my side.

–Indigo Girls, *Land of Canaan*

Regnant and Thrall

Chapter One: Introduction

Therefore with the same necessity with which the stone falls to earth, the hungry wolf buries its fangs in the flesh of its prey, without the possibility of the knowledge that it itself is the destroyed as well as the destroyer.

– Schopenheuer

This is a game of make-believe, of pretend, of storytelling. Though a game, it is more about storytelling than it is about winning. If you've never done this kind of thing before, you may be confused by the whole premise of a storytelling game. But once you catch on to the basic concepts, you'll find that it isn't all that strange.

You, along with some of your friends, are going to weave wondrous tales. Stories of monsters and creatures of the night. Tales of peril, horror and sinister, shadowy evil. And at the heart of it all are Vampires. These stories are of a more grim and dark nature than the fairy tales that you might remember (though those too were rather grim if you think back), and they will capture your imagination and involve you far more deeply than any play or movie. This is because you're *inside* the story and not just watching it. This game is your opportunity to truly experience horror, not just watch it.

This storytelling game provides a way to experience a terror of an all too immediate nature, for it allows you to experience the horror from the *other* side of the mirror. The horror of **Vampire** is the curse of what it is like to be half-beast and half-angel, trapped in a world of no absolutes, where morality is chosen, not ordained. The horror of **Vampire** is the stirrings of the Beast within and the cravings for warm blood. Perhaps the greatest risk of playing **Vampire** is seeing yourself in the mirror. To play this game, you must bear witness to the madness within you, that which you strive to master and overcome, that which you cannot bear to face.

Unless you are willing to face the reflection of your *own* imperfections, then this game is not for you.

The centuries stretch before you, beckoning. There is little in this world that is not within your reach or grasp. Now you are free, no longer a gear within a machine. The world is your stage and all of its people mere props in your hands.

You are a predator, a hunter who feeds upon others to give yourself life. Around you moves a great Herd, blind to your presence, unaware of the dire threat you pose. Ignorant, they perform the quiet motions of their life, each simple action and gesture increasing your attraction to them. They are beauty beyond words.

You do not crave money or clothing, riches or power, though you may desire such as a passing fancy. The only thing you truly need is blood—the river of life coursing through the veins of each and every human. That is the price for what you have become—and it may cost you your soul. Blood is the be all and end all of your existence. But what an existence it is!

Day has become night and night become day. In the night, you are all-powerful; no mortal can surpass your potency. Neither bullets nor blades can end your existence. Only the sun do you fear. Its accursed rays bring the kiss of death.

But that is not all, for neither are you alone. Others call this world their playground, and the playground is only large enough for so many. All the Kindred are your brothers and sisters now, but even a brother may kill his brother, even as did the first of your kind.

Beyond the other Kindred there are the Lupines, the Magi, and Arcadian brethren, and some even say the Shades of the netherworld. Though not all are opposed to you, they do not tolerate your presence in their realms, but sometimes two fates become intertwined.

Above all other dangers stands the wash of humanity. You are but a parasite, and if your host but knew of your existence, you would be crushed, like a flea between two pinched fingers. The slightest mistake can bring the Inquisition with burning torches to the door of your Haven. The Masquerade must go on and none must learn of your existence — lest life-in-death shall become at last a final rest.

Though you face great peril, there is no doubt that you are a creature of immense power. Your mystical powers are vast and your potential unparalleled. The only thing over which you do not have complete control is yourself. Your limitations lie not in what you can do, but in who and what you are. The Beast that lurks within you may rise up at any time, destroying all that you touch and dare to love. It is you yourself, not the perils and enemies you face, who makes your life a nightmare.

And as your Humanity slowly slips away, you may begin to realize just what you have lost....

Storytelling

The Stage but echoes back the public voice,
The drama's laws the drama's patrons give
For we that live to please, must please to live.

– Samuel Clemens

Long ago, before movies, TV, radio and books, people used to tell stories. Tales on the hunt, legends about the gods and the great spirits, or gossip about the affairs of others all drew rapt attention. They would tell these stories aloud, as part of an oral tradition of storytelling, but this tradition has been mostly lost. Other forms of storytelling have taken its place.

We no longer tell stories, we listen to them, we sit passively and wait to be picked up and carried to the world they describe, to the unique perception of reality they embrace. We have become slaves to our TVs, and passively permit others to describe our lives, our culture and our personal reality through the stories that are constantly being told.

However, there is another way. Today the ancient art of storytelling has been rediscovered. A new movement is slowly growing. People are bringing stories home, making the ancient myths and legends a more substantial part of their lives. Storytelling on a personal level, rather than on the big screen or on TV, has become increasingly a part of our culture. That is what this game is all about, not stories that will be told to you, but stories that you will tell yourself.

In practical terms, stories are narratives, either fictitious or fact, which describe a series of incidents. In psychological terms, stories are the wellstones of the soul, the declaration of images and concepts which move the spirit and develop the mind. In personal terms, stories are pleasurable to hear and tell because they speak of who and what we are.

Storytelling allows us to understand ourselves by giving us a method to explain our triumphs and defeats. By looking at our culture, our family and ourselves in a new context, we can understand things we never realized before. It is entertaining because it is so revealing. Stories are somehow basic to our psychology. Stories play such an enormous role in our culture that it can't be accidental. Our obsession with them has some strange purpose to it.

Roleplaying

Childhood is the kingdom where nobody dies.
Nobody that matters, that is.

–Edna St. Vincent Millay, *Childhood is the Kingdom where Nobody dies*

Vampire is not only a storytelling game, but a roleplaying game as well. You not only tell stories, but you also act through them. Roleplaying is a type of interactive storytelling. As a player of **Vampire**, you will take on the persona and role of a character which you create, and then pretend to be that character during the course of the story. One of the players is the Storyteller, who creates and guides the story. The Storyteller describes what happens as a result of what the players say and do. It is the Storyteller who decides if the characters succeed or fail, suffer or prosper, live or die.

Ultimately, the life of a character is in the player's hands, for the player decides what the character says and does. The player decides what risks to accept or decline. Everything you do when you play your character has an effect on the world. Characters are central to a story, for they create and direct the plot — without characters you can't have a story. As the story flows, it is the characters who direct and energize the progress of the plot, not the decisions of the Storyteller.

To understand roleplaying, you only have to go back to your childhood and those wonderful afternoons spent playing Cops n' Robbers, Cowboys and Indians, and Dress-up. What you were doing was roleplaying, a sort of spontaneous and natural acting that completely occupied your imagination. The play-acting helped you learn about life and what it meant to be grown-up. It was an essential part of childhood, but just because you have succeeded in growing up doesn't mean you have to stop. Adulthood brings responsibility, but we don't necessarily have to give up childhood's frivolous, open-minded love of fun. Nowadays, society allows us to remain a child. We can go back to roleplaying.

In **Vampire**, unlike in pretend, there are a few rules to help you roleplay. They are used mainly to avoid arguments, "Bang! Bang! You're dead — No I'm not!" and add a deeper sense of realism to the story. Rules direct the progress of the story, and help define the capacities and weaknesses of the characters. These rules are described in the following chapter.

The Storyteller

Life has confided so many stories to me, I shall have to retell them to people who cannot read the book of life itself.

– Elly Hillesum, *An Interrupted Life*

Vampire is structured a little differently than the games you might be used to. In the first place, there is no board. Secondly, one player needs to be the Storyteller — the person who creates and leads the stories. Being the Storyteller is something like being the Banker in Monopoly™, only even more important. It is a very demanding task, but it is also one of the most rewarding.

The Storyteller's primary duty is to make sure the other players have a good time. The way to do that is to tell a good

story. Unlike traditional Storytellers, however, you don't simply tell the story, you create the story and then you let the players live it out in the roles of the primary characters. It is a careful balance between narration and adjudication, between story and game. Sometimes you must set the scene or describe what occurs (such as when the characters were asleep), but mostly you must decide what occurs in reaction to the words and actions of the characters — as fairly and impartially as you can.

As the Storyteller, you are going to have to create and guide stories for the enjoyment of the other players. You are in charge as a umpire or coach, yet you are also an entertainer — you must balance your two roles. Most of this book was written to help you do just that. Not to make being a Storyteller easy, because it never will be, but to make you better at it.

The role of the Storyteller is explained in much more detail in the Storytelling chapter (page 227).

The Players

Most people who play this game will be players, assuming the roles of the central characters in the story. To play **Vampire** you need to create a character, and then you need to roleplay that character. Being a player does not require as much responsibility as being a Storyteller, but just as much effort and concentration. You begin the game in the role of a Vampire — one newly created and as yet unfamiliar with the world of Vampires. You must be both an actor and a player.

As an actor, you speak for your character and act out whatever you wish your character to do or say. Whatever you say, your character says, unless you are specifically asking a question of the Storyteller or are describing your actions. By announcing and describing to the other players what you are doing, you become a part of the ongoing story. You try to do things which allow your character to succeed, so as to "win the game." This strategy element of the game is essential, for it is what so often creates the thrill and excitement of a dramatic moment.

Often after describing the actions you want to take, you will need to make dice rolls to see if you succeed in doing what you have illustrated with words. Your Character Traits, descriptions of your strengths and weaknesses, dictate how well you can do certain things. Actions are a basic part of **Vampire**, for they describe how characters change the world.

To be a good player, you must become both an actor and a strategist — balancing the personality and survival instincts of your character. You try to "win" the game by employing your character's strengths and working around your character's weaknesses

To some extent, you are also the Storyteller and may add ideas and elements to the story which the Storyteller may accept or reject as she sees fit. In the end, it is the story, not the character, which is the most important.

Shelzza has much to learn about hiding from the mortals around her – she is new to this city.

In **Vampire**, it is best to play with only a few players, five at the very most. It is far too personal a game to make it very enjoyable with a large group. Much of its mystery and flavor is lost when players must compete for attention. Indeed, we have found **Vampire** works best with a Storyteller and a troupe of only three players.

He don't give a hoot of warning
Wrapped in a black cat cloak.
He don't go in the light of morning.
He's split, the time the cock'rel crows.

– The Rolling Stones, *Midnight Rambler*

Characters

There are many different elements which make up what we like to think of as "self." Too many elements are involved to truly separate or identify what they are. We do indeed wear many masks. It is from this that our will and desire to become someone else originates.

Just as the blood called to the first among her kind, the sweet ichor is both a lust and a need for her.

We must recreate ourselves every morning and compose our identity from a number of different sources — from how our friends think of us, what our parents or children expect of us, and how we think our experience should affect us, all in conjunction with the habits and talents developed over a lifetime. Each day we balance all of our disparate selves and unite them into one working, talking whole. We pretend to be whole, and in the act of make-believe, we create the reality.

This is why, when we roleplay, when we pretend to be other than who we really are, it's not possible to fully leave your own self behind when you roleplay. It is simply not possible. Part of your character will be different from yourself. In fact, quite frequently you will roleplay someone with Traits quite different from your own — but always, in some essential way, that character will reflect some aspect of yourself.

Vampire characters are easy to create. It takes only a few minutes to work out all your Traits and your basic personalty, but it will take some effort to make this collection of numbers into a living, breathing person. You must reach deep inside of yourself to find enough that is true and real to produce a complete character. Frankenstein was easily assembled from available body parts. It was the recreation of life that proved difficult.

Characters are the literary versions of a real person — they are not real, but capture some aspect of reality. When you enter the world that is woven by the story, your character can become a person. They are real only with you as the animating force — the soul if you wish. Never treat your characters as a projection of yourself (even if that's all they are). Treat them as a work of art, as a fragile expression of your poetic sensitivity. If you can appreciate your characters as art, you can roleplay them as they were meant to be. A character is a truly precious thing, you must treasure the characters that you create.

Winner and Losers

There is no single "winner" of **Vampire**, since the object is not to defeat the other players. To win at all, you need to cooperate with the other players. Because this is a storytelling game, there is no way to claim victory for yourself. In fact, it is a game in which you are likely to lose, for it is difficult to do anything to slow your character's inexorable slide into chaos. The whole idea is to hang on as long as possible, to eke out the most drama from the ongoing tragedy.

The only true measure of success in **Vampire** is surviving. If the character has some other great overwhelming drive, such as revenge, accomplishing it is also a measure of success. Additionally, stories have conclusions that either benefit or harm the characters. If the characters learn that a presumed serial killer is really a Vampire and manage to halt her rampage, then they "win." If they never even find out just who was behind the murders, much less manage to stop her, then they lose.

Listen sweet Childe.

And learn what you must soon face.

The streets the Vampire walks are the same streets the living walk. It is the Vampire that is the difference. It is the Vampire of whom you must be wary.

Vampire society is built upon the principle of power. Those who exert it the most forcefully can claim Domain over the city, and by controlling the cities they can restrict the other Vampires who live there. Though a Vampire may claim Domain over a city, never can one become Prince if one's claim is challenged. Once challenged, only blood will settle who will become Prince. Thus only the powerful seek Domain.

However, such power is of little meaning to most Kindred. The desire for it is a human instinct and over time the desire and respect for power disappears. While there are certain rights that go with it, only those who are of this modern age still lust after it. No Vampires may Sire without the permission of their Prince, and until Neonates are presented to the Prince, their sins are the Sire's responsibility. When wrong is done, only the Prince may call a Blood Hunt. Finally, those who enter the Domain must present themselves to the Prince, though we of the Inconnu, of course, do not ever submit ourselves to them. These Princes may be Elders, but they are not equal to us.

The largest Sect among the Kindred is the Camarilla, and it is to them you must go. They live within mortal society as well as prey upon it. They still struggle to preserve the Masquerade, to keep the mortals from learning of us. The Camarilla is the foundation of the peace which exists between most of our kind, and it supports the Prince who rules each city, for they are the only ones with the power to support the ancient Traditions.

The Sabbat are the great enemies of the Camarilla. This group of psychotic diabolists lives outside human society, but freely prey upon it. They play a most potent role in the Jyhad, though they are not under the complete control of the Ancients. All who venture to their cities do so at their own risk. The Sabbat inducts their Neonates by burying them alive. Only a few ever manage to crawl to the surface; the rest must wait within the ground for all eternity — screaming soundlessly in their forgotten graves. In North America, the Sabbat controls New York, Miami, Toronto, Montreal, Pittsburgh, Detroit, Portland and Philadelphia, as well as a number of smaller cities.

And finally there is the Inconnu, the most obscure of the sects. We are the Eldest of Elders, other than the Antediluvians, and have distanced ourselves from the other Kindred. We are ancient, powerful and have little need for the company of either humans or Kindred.

Though you must of course be wary of the witch-hunters, it is the other Vampires whom you should most fear. The Blood of some Elders has thinned and they can no longer survive on mortal Vitæ, but must feed upon other Vampires instead. Many of us create Broods so that we can feed from them, as we cannot be Blood Bound by our own Progeny.

That is why I created you....

In order to aid victory, the characters must usually become friends. They look out for one another and have a modicum of trust in each other. The world in which Vampires exist is so dangerous that you need someone you can trust for survival. It is an evolutionary adaptation.

Playing Aids

For the most part, **Vampire** was designed to be played at a table. Though there is no board, there a number of props which require a table to use properly. You will need dice, pencil and paper, and photocopies of the character sheets. The dice required are ten-sided, which you can procure in any game store. The Storyteller may also want to have paper on hand, in order to sketch out a setting so as to more easily describe it to the players, as well as a few other props to show the players what the characters are seeing (photographs, matches, scarves, anything to make the experience more vivid).

Daylight has come and she seeks safety in her mausoleum Haven. The dead haunt this place, but they do not yet inhabit her mind.

Live-Action

The dynamic principle of fantasy is play.

– C.G. Jung

Vampire was designed to allow for the easy inclusion of Live-Action roleplaying. It includes instructions and hints on how to run parts of the game using Live-Action roleplaying, where players physically play out the actions of their characters as an actor would (though without weapons or combat of any sort and always within the home). These periodic episodes will be played when the characters are at "home base" or in situations where inter-character roleplaying is at a premium.

Essentially, instead of sitting down and telling everyone what your character says and does, you stand up and act it out, actually saying what your character says and doing (for the most part) what your character does. Advice is given to the Storyteller on how to stage and guide these episodes, with particular emphasis on how to introduce plot elements that provoke roleplaying between the players (intrigue, distrust, debate and acrimony).

Shelzza awakens to find a trio of visitors who smell of an Elder Blood. They bid, nay command her to accompany them.

Vampires

But first, on earth as Vampire sent,
Thy corpse shall from its tomb be rent;
Then ghastly haunt thy native place,
And suck the blood of all thy race.

– Lord Byron

In **Vampire**, you roleplay one of those denizens of the night who suck the blood of their victims and then throw away the drained corpses. You roleplay a Vampire. Though you may have great courage, compassion and self-control, ultimately you will not be able to resist doing evil, for you have gained both the instincts and needs of a predator. The Beast is strong within you. Though you will regret what you are and the things you do, you cannot deny it or excise it from your soul. But resist you must, lest you slip away into complete degeneration and chaos.

It is difficult to be good, for so many of your urges drive you toward sin, but if you falter, you will lose your essential Humanity all the more quickly. You will become overwhelmed by the Beast within if you do not constantly strive to maintain the veneer of culture and civilization. You must master the Beast, lest the Beast master you. Evil tends to provide its own reward.

Players in **Vampire** take on the role of a newly created Vampire, a Fledgling, only recently "released" by the Sire. They must struggle to survive, and begin to understand the strange world in which they have been thrust — most likely against their will. In the end, they may persevere, for a lucky few are able to escape the curse and return to their human life. Others may seek Golconda so as to find stability and power as a Vampire, but most will never know that it exists.

It is assumed that all of the characters will be friends, and that during the game they will operate as a group. That is not to say that they will always get along, but they will watch each other's backs and will share a few common ambitions. Such groups of Vampires are not uncommon, indeed there are names for such gangs. Though "Brood" once only meant the progeny of a Vampire, the brothers and sisters born of a single Sire, it has also come to mean any group of young Vampires who have banded together for self protection. The Elders call Broods "Coiteries," but usage of this term is not as common. Whatever the name, it is this group that each and every character will come to depend upon. It is the Brood that unites the characters and enables the players to work together throughout the story.

Detailed discussions of Vampires may be found throughout the game (naturally enough), but most information can be found in the Setting Chapter (page 167).

The Becoming

The moment a human becomes a Vampire is never forgotten, for the transformation is usually painful and traumatic. A Vampire is created when an existing Vampire drains all the blood from a mortal, killing him. However, just before the final and absolute death sets in, the Sire pierces open their own skin and returns a small amount of blood into the victim's mouth. This rouses them somewhat, and they begin to drink from the Sire's open wound. All it takes for the transformation to occur is the absence of your own blood and the tiniest bit of Vampire Blood.

The character takes on the lineage of their Sire and is therefore of the same Clan. The Clan membership affects which Disciplines the character can have at the start of the game, as well as delineates a special weakness of the character. Often characters of the same Clan will be allies and will strive to support one another, though this is not always the case.

For the next few years, or decades, the Neonates remain with their Sire. They may be taught nothing or everything, nurtured or abused, restricted or granted full freedom. But until they are released by their Sire and presented to the Prince of the City, they are not accepted in Vampire society.

The Hunger

I forget how to move
When my mouth is this dry
And my eyes are bursting hearts
In a bloodstained sky
Oh it was sweet and wild.

– The Cure, *Homesick*

Vampires must feed, it's a fact of their existence. It is not merely a need, it is an all-consuming passion. The Hunger for blood is merely the instinct for survival, for only through blood may the Vampire survive. The blood need not be human, and even if it is mortal Vitae, the death of the Vessel is not required. However, the blood lust often causes older Vampires to lose their restraint when they begin to feed, and thus drain all life from their victims. Vampire teeth leave only a small wound, and even this disappears if the Vampire licks the wound.

Because the Sire never returns to the Neonate *all* of the blood which they withdrew, the young Vampire is soon consumed by a ravenous Hunger for blood. As they have no experience with this overwhelming urge, it is as total as it is immediate. The Fledgling cannot fight the urge except through a constant exertion of Willpower, and even then Frenzy might overcome them if fresh blood comes within smelling distance.

Vampires need regular feedings of blood, usually once or twice a week. In terms of the game, the amount of blood a character needs and has in their system is described by "Blood Points." The more Blood Points you have (the normal maximum being 10) the "rosier" you appear and the further from starvation you stand.

Nature of the Beast

... with the absolute heart of the poem of life butchered out of their own bodies good to eat a thousand years.

– Allen Ginsberg, *Howl*

What does it mean to be a Vampire? Vampires are not, despite their appearance, human — they have an alien nature and are an inhuman race. Yet they are similar enough to us that we can compare and contrast them to humanity. By comparing Vampires to humans, it is possible to discover what their capabilities and limitations are. Vampires differ from mortals in some fundamental ways. Start with the picture of a human, but never make the mistake of thinking Vampires are like us.

Through the crowded streets of Babylon they travel, through the herd she tends. But now she is the one who is prodded.

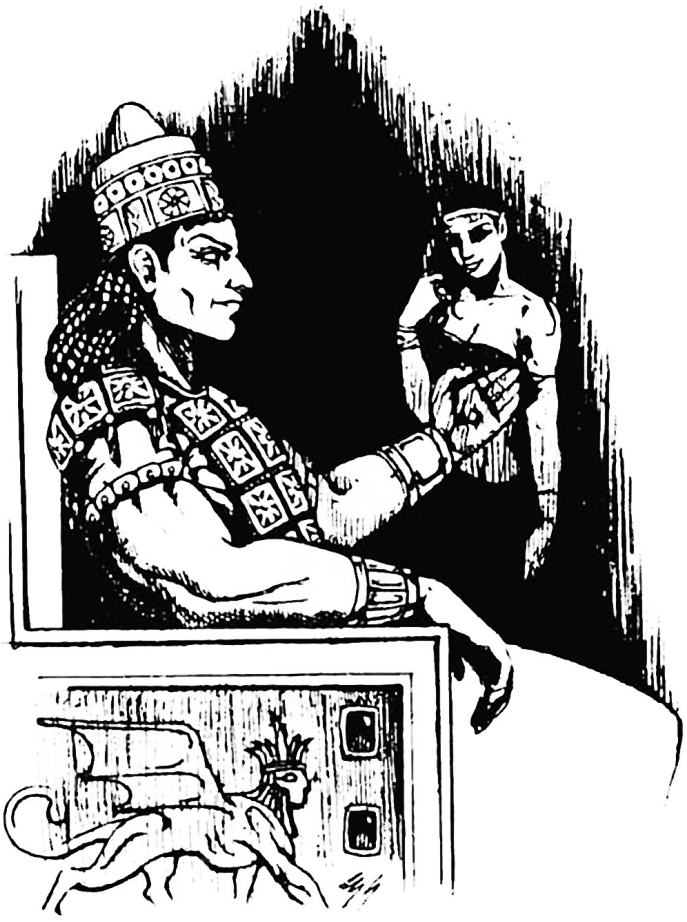
It is important to keep in mind that a Vampire's basic needs differ completely, so other desires vary as well. Food other than blood is no longer necessary — you can't just purchase blood in your local grocery store either. Mortal power is an empty pleasure. It can be a hobby perhaps, but it can never truly capture the imagination. Vampires are predators, and they seek to prove themselves as hunters, not as rulers.

Vampire Powers

• Fangs: Almost all Kindred have retractable fangs — small sharp teeth which extend when they are about to feed and allow them to pierce their victim's skin and suck the blood through the created hole. They merely need to bite, retract the teeth from the wound, and begin to drink. This makes the piercing of an artery easy and clean. If the Vampire licks the wound after they drink, then no trace of their feeding will remain. Indeed, if a Vampire ever licks any wound which they have caused with their claws or fangs, they can heal it completely.

• Blood: Vampires are able to heal their wounds using the blood they feed on. They are even able to regenerate limbs and organs (given time). Regeneration always takes them back to the state of their death, including hair length, face shape, body weight — severything. They are already dead, so they cannot die, except through the forces of life — the eternal sun and the primordial flame. Also by using Blood Points, Vampires are capable of performing great feats. This can include such actions as jumping onto the roof of a house from the ground, or lifting a car off of a person trapped underneath.

• Disciplines: There are ten different Disciplines a character can choose from — Disciplines are supernatural powers which describe specific exceptional powers. These are most often Clan Disciplines, powers which tend to run along Clan lines. However, as Vampires grow in power, they are able to gain proficiency in other Disciplines as well.



Her discomfort grows as she is directed into the palace of the king. But he is one of her kind and she rejoices.

Vampire Weaknesses

• Sunlight: Vampires sleep during the day and are active during the night. This is because they are burned by the mere touch of sunlight — it is one of the few things which can actually kill them. Each game turn that Vampires are in the sun, they get burned — the equivalent of third degree burns for humans. They may even burst into flames. Fire has a similar effect upon them. During the day, Vampires are very sluggish, and find it difficult to take any sort of action.

• Frenzy: Vampires are creatures of instinct, and they have the instincts of a predator. It is the conflict between the remaining humanity and what has become Vampiric that creates most of the turmoil in a Vampire's life. Because of the effort to balance these two opposed things, Vampires tend to lose their sanity very easily. Some Kindred simply ignore the human side, giving in to their Vampiric instincts and thereby alleviating the conflict, while others search for Golconda.

• Humanity: The amount of Humanity a Vampire possesses is vitally important to the character. Vampires need to retain their sense of humanness as much as possible or grow more distant from the human world and thus from their own roots. The less human they become, the more monstrous they get. Eventually, they lose track of what they are and have no means of keeping in touch with any other aspect of their nature but the Beast within.

• Pursued by Mortals: You are a monster and those few mortals who believe in your existence will go to nearly any length to destroy you. The Kindred have many enemies, and for them, the Inquisition has never truly ended.

• Hunted by Other Vampires: Mortals are not the only ones who hunt Kindred. Some Elders hunt among the

undead for their sustenance, unsatiated with mortal fare. The oldest of the Kindred cannot even survive on any other sort of Vitæ. The Jyhad is said to be caused by this twisted thirst, and much of the conflict among the Kindred is caused by it.

Misconceptions

• Wooden Stakes: A wooden stake through the heart will not kill a Vampire, however, it will immobilize them and make them easier to kill.

• Mirrors: A Vampire can see her own reflection in the mirror, though some Kindred pretend otherwise in honor of the great cinematic tradition. Likewise, they can appear on film. Indeed, some Kindred have even appeared in movies.

• Holy Symbols: Though it is true that some very holy men can use a cross to fend off a Vampire, it is not a common effect. In such occasions, it is not the power of the symbol that is at work, but rather the essence of the person holding it. Either their essential holiness or some paranormal power affects the Vampire.

• Enter without being Invited: It is ludicrous to presume that a Vampire would not be able to travel about as he would like. A Vampire may enter any house at any time.

• Running Water: It is equally preposterous to think that a Vampire would not be able to cross running water, though it is not hard to imagine how these fabrications began. Humans will spin all manner of lies to overcome their fears.

• Garlic: Though some sensitive Vampires do not like the smell, it cannot ward them away.

Devil and the deep blue sea behind me
Vanish in the air you'll never find me
I will turn your face to alabaster
Then you will find your servant is your master.

– The Police, *Wrapped Around Your Finger*

The Book of Nod

The earliest history of the Vampire is said to be written down in the legendary Book Of Nod. Named for the place east of Eden where Caine first traveled, it is said to chronicle his subsequent rising and falling from temporal power, and the tumultuous birthing of the Vampire bloodlines. None truly know if it is fact or fiction, though the Anarchs hold it in great scorn. Only the Antediluvians know the truth, though some even doubt the existence of those ancient Kindred.

In the beginning there was only Caine.
Caine who murdered his brother out of anger.
Caine who was cast out.
Caine who was cursed forever with immortality, and
A lust for blood.
It is Caine from whom we all come,
Our Sire's Sire.

For the passing of an age, he lived in solitude,
In loneliness and suffering.
For an eon he remained alone.
But with the passing of memory so did depart a measure of his sorrow.
One day he returned to the world of man,
To the world that his brother's children had created.
He returned and he was made welcome.
The people saw his power, they worshiped him,
And made him King of their great City.
The first City, by the name of Enoch.

Though he became ruler of a mighty nation, he was still alone,
For none were as he. His sorrow grew once again.
Then he committed another great sin, for he beget Progeny,
Of which there were only three.
But from them came more Progeny, his grandchildren,
And then Caine said, "An end to this crime, there shall be no more."
And as Caine's word was the law, his Brood obeyed him.

The city stood for many passings of the ages,
And become the center of a mighty Empire.
But then came the Calamity, a great Flood that washed over the world.
The City was destroyed,
And its people along with it.

Again Caine fell into great sorrow and went into solitude,
Becoming as a dog amidst the wastes,
And leaving his Progeny to their own ends.
They came to him and begged him to return,
To help them rebuild the City.
But he would not come with them,
Saying that the Flood had been sent as punishment
For his having returned to the world of the living
And subverting the true law.

So they returned alone to what mortals were left
And announced that they were the new rulers.
Each created their own Brood,
In order that they might claim the glory of Caine,
Yet they did not have his wisdom or restraint.
Between them came a great war, the Elders against their Children,
And the Children slew their parents.

The rebels then built a new city
And brought to it 13 tribes.
It was a beautiful city and its people worshiped them as gods.
They created new Progeny of their own,
The Fourth generation of Cainites.

But they feared the Jyhad,
And it was forbidden for those Children
To create others of their kind.
This power their Elders kept for themselves.
When a Childe was created, it was hunted down and killed,
And its Sire with it.

Though this city was as great as Caine's, eventually it grew old,
As do all living things, it slowly began to die.
The gods at first did not see the truth,
And when they at last looked about them it was too late.
Their city was destroyed and their power extinguished,
And they were forced to flee, their Progeny along with them.
But many were killed in the flight, for they had grown weak.
With their authority gone, all were free to create their own Broods,
And soon there were many new Kindred
Who ruled across the face of the Earth.

But this could not last.
Over time, there came to be too many of the Kindred,
And then came fighting between them once again.
The Elders were already deep into hiding.
For they had learned caution.
But their Children had founded their own cities and Broods,
It is they who were killed in the great wave of war.
The war was so total that there are none of that Generation
To speak of themselves any longer.
Waves of mortal flesh were sent across continents
In order to crush and burn the cities of the Kindred.
Mortals thought they were fighting their own wars,
But it is for us that they spilt their blood.
We have special memories of Odysseus, Xerxes and Alexander.

Once this war was over,
All of the Kindred went into hiding from one another
And from the humanity that surrounded them.
It is in that hiding which we remain today,
For the Jyhad continues still.

Tremere (trem' - âr)

Chapter Two: Rules

Mythology is a rendition of forms, through which the formless form of forms can be known.

– Joseph Campell

Every game has rules. Some have only a few and are quite simple, such as Chutes and Ladders, while others have a great many and are extremely complicated, like Bridge. **Vampire** has something in common with both — it has only a few simple rules, but these few rules have a large number of permutations. You need only learn the basic rules, but it is their permutations that create the flavor of the game and allow it to reflect the true complexity of real life.

This chapter provides the basic rules of **Vampire**, the permutations are what the rest of the book is about. Rules are like the myths which shape and describe a culture. They define what is important and sacred, what is seen as difficult and trying, and delineate the possibilities of existence. Though these rules may seem somewhat strange and exotic, they really aren't all that complicated. Once you understand them, you'll understand how to play the game. Just concentrate on learning these basics and everything else in the game will come naturally.

Periods of Time

Time is the moving image of reality.

– Plato

The first thing you need to learn is how time passes in **Vampire**. There are five different ways to describe time, going from the smallest unit to the all-encompassing one.

• **Turn** — One unit of time within a scene, anywhere from 3 seconds to 3 minutes long. A turn is enough time to take one action (discussed below).

• **Scene** — One compact period of time in one location. It is made up of a variable number of Turns (as many as it takes to complete it) or is straightforward roleplaying.

• **Chapter** — One independent part of a story, almost always played in one game session. It is made up of a number of Scenes, as well as connecting periods of downtime.

• **Story** — One complete tale, with an introduction, buildup and climax, often taking several Chapters to complete.

• **Chronicle** — A whole chain of Stories connected together by the ongoing lives of the characters and perhaps a broadly conceived theme and plot. It is simply the ongoing game played by the troupe.

Actions

Besides acting out their characters' speeches and conversations, players will want their characters to attempt to perform the actions they have described to the Storyteller. Actions can be anything from jumping over a gorge to taking a glance behind you to see if you are being followed. The player tells the Storyteller what his character is doing and details the procedure they use.

Many actions are automatic, such as when you tell the Storyteller that you walk across the street toward the warehouse. All the Storyteller needs to do is keep track of where you are and what you are doing. The Storyteller might simply tell you, "You've reached the warehouse and you see that the door stands slightly ajar, the broken lock lying on the pavement."

Some actions are not automatic and require a dice roll to determine success or failure.

Rolling Dice

And the game never ends when your whole world depends On the turn of a friendly card.

– The Alan Parsons Project, *Turn of a Friendly Card*

There is always chance in life. Luck, some call it. There's a chance that you'll win the lottery (if you bought a ticket), a chance that you'll be audited, a chance that you will die in a plane crash. Chance plays a role in **Vampire**, as well. However, we use dice to simulate the duplicity of Lady Luck.

The game system in **Vampire** consists of rolling ten-sided dice, which you can buy in any game store. You will need to get together as many as you can find, so find a place where you can buy yourself a handful. If you are the Storyteller, you will want a lot of dice, at least ten, all to yourself. As a player, you'll want dice as well, but sharing dice with other players will work just fine.

Whenever the success of an action is in doubt or the Storyteller thinks that there is a chance you might fail, you will have to roll dice. This gives your character an opportunity to let both weaknesses and strengths exhibit themselves, revealing something of the character's true nature to both you and the other players.

Ratings

A character is described by his or her Traits, numbers essentially, which allow them to interact with the rules. Each Trait has a rating from 1-5, which describes how good the character is in that particular Trait. One is pretty lousy and five is superb. This scale of 1 to 5 is the "star" rating system made famous by movie and restaurant critics.

You should consider the normal human range to be from one to three, with two being average. However, exceptional people, Vampires especially, can have Traits of four (exceptional) or five (superb), or even have a zero in a Trait (which is extremely rare, but not unheard of).

The sculptures of blood set Shezzla's senses aflame. Never has she known such passion.

x	Abysmal
•	Poor
••	Average
•••	Good
••••	Exceptional
•••••	Superb

For every dot your character has in a particular Attribute, you get to roll one die. Thus, if you had four dots on Strength, you would get to roll four dice. If you had a one Perception, you would get to roll only one die.

However, you almost never simply roll the number of dice you have in an Attribute, which are your intrinsic capabilities. Usually you get to add the number of dice you have in an Attribute with the number of dice you have in an Ability, things which you know and have learned. A sort of pairing of natural and learned aptitudes — the old Nature and Nurture thing.

So if you wanted a player to roll to see if they will notice the patrol car creeping up behind him, you would have them roll their Perception + Alertness — an Attribute + an Ability. They would take as many dice as they had points of Perception, put them in their hand, then they would take as many dice as they had points of Alertness, and put those in their hand also. You get to roll as many dice as you have total points in your Ability and Attribute.

These dice are called the Dice Pool, which is a description of the total number of dice you roll in a single turn, usually for a single action.

There are many actions that don't require or even have an Ability that is appropriate, such as when you want to break down a door. In such cases, you would only use the Attribute and the number of dice you have listed for that Attribute.

There is absolutely never a situation where more than two Traits can add to a Dice Pool. Only one Trait can be used if it has a potential value of 10 (such as Humanity or Willpower). Essentially, it is impossible for a normal human being to have more than 10 dice in a Dice Pool (though Vampires are a different story).

Difficulties

Oftentimes, to win us to our harm,
The instruments of darkness tell us truths;
Win us with honest trifles, to betrays's
In deepest consequence.

— William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

Now you've got to figure out what you're looking for when you roll the dice. The Storyteller will give you a difficulty

Difficulty Numbers

Three:	Easy
Four:	Routine
Five:	Straightforward
Six:	Average
Seven:	Challenging
Eight:	Difficult
Nine	Bloody Hard

Degrees of Success

Single (one)	Marginal
Double (two)	Moderate
Triple (three)	Complete
Quadruple (Four)	Exceptional
Quintuple (Five)	Phenomenal

number, which is the number that you need to get in order to have a success. A difficulty is always a number between two and ten. You need to get that number or higher on at least one of the dice you roll in order to succeed. Every time you do so, it's called a success. If the difficulty is a six and you roll a 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9, you will have scored two successes. Though you need only one success to actually succeed, the more successes you get, the better you do. Getting only one success is considered a marginal success, getting three is considered a complete success, and getting five is a momentous event.

You can see how, if the difficulty is lower, it's easy to get a success, and if it's higher, it is more difficult. The Storyteller will assign high difficulties whenever the action you have decided to take is difficult, and will either let you do something automatically (because your Attributes and Abilities are so high) or give you a low difficulty if it is particularly easy.

Though they are not on the list above, the Storyteller can also assign a difficulty of two or ten. However, these should almost never be used. Difficulty two is so pathetically easy, you might as well let the player succeed without wasting time on a roll. Difficulty ten is so difficult that there is an equal chance to succeed as there is to botch (see below), no matter how many dice the player is rolling. A ten is pretty near impossible. On the rare occasions when you announce a difficulty of ten, be sure you realize how impossible you are making the character's success.

Unless the Storyteller says otherwise, the difficulty for a particular task is always a six. Most actions will require sixes. This is the standard assumed difficulty. Additionally, if a player ever rolls a ten, it is automatically a success, no matter what.

Rule of One

There is one last thing that you've got to learn about rolling dice, and that is the "rule of one." Whenever you roll a one, it cancels out a success. It completely takes it away. You remove both the "success" die and the "one" die and pay them no more heed. If you roll more ones than you do successes, a disaster occurs; something called a botch takes place. Don't count the ones that canceled out successes, but if even a single one is left, then a botch occurs. Getting a single one or five ones is about the same, it is the circumstances surrounding the botch that determine if it is catastrophic or a minor mishap. You will learn to dread snake eyes.

Once you've figured out how many dice you need, roll them, and then check to see how many successes you've gotten. Count the number of ones rolled, and cancel out one success for each one. If there are any successes left after this,

Over three days, they irrevocably bind their souls together. The blood of mortals is as water in comparison.

The Character Sheet

*If you look on the next page, you will see an example of a complete **Vampire** character sheet. The character is a young **Vampire** named Malcolm, and the examples throughout the book will use him as their subject. The following is a quick tour of the Traits that describe him.*

The top of the character sheet is taken up with basic information, such as the character's name, the player's name, and the name of the Chronicle that is being played. The other things listed up there along the top, such as Demeanor, Clan and Haven, are explained in the next chapter.

There are three major classifications of Traits, and they make up the three big boxes you see on the character sheet. Attributes and Abilities we've already mentioned. Advantages are the things which make the character extra special.

*The Attributes are one of the most important aspects of a character. They are the innate aptitudes and potentials of a character. Attributes are divided into three categories: Physical, Social and Mental. Each category is divided up into three different Traits (three is an important number in **Vampire**).*

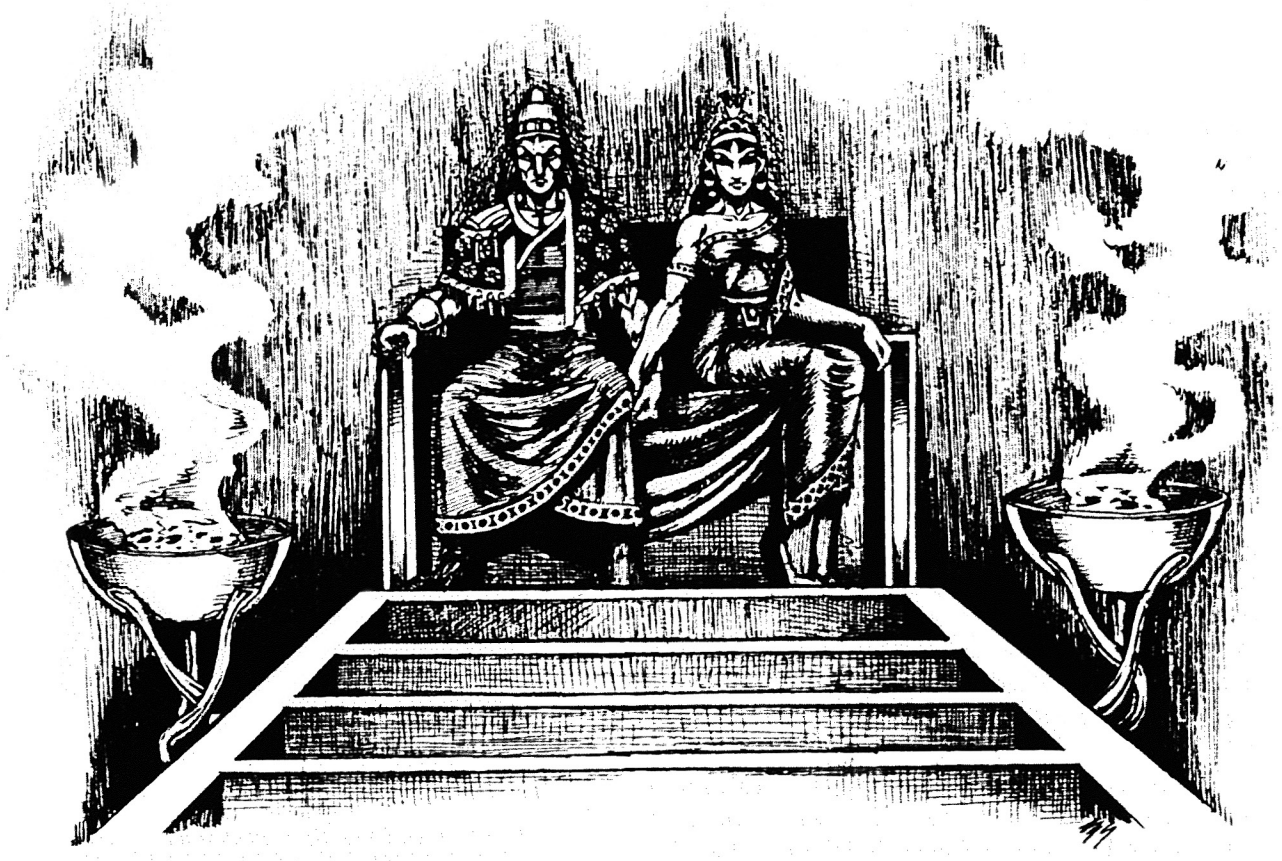
Abilities are as important as Attributes, but they are the things which a character knows and have been learned over the years. Abilities are divided into three categories: Talents, Skills and Knowledge.

Advantages is a combination of three different categories, each of which describes different ways for a character to be unique. Disciplines are the mystical traits which define the powers of a Vampire. Backgrounds describe the social advantages that a character can have. Virtues describe the moral advantages of the character.

At the bottom of the character sheet are three other Traits — the only ones that work on a scale of 1-10 rather than 1-5. Humanity describes the extent to which a Vampire has resisted the Beast and retained his human nature. Willpower is a measure of the self-confidence and determination of a character. Blood Points simply show how much blood is still in the Vampire's body. On the left is a place to put your combat statistics. On the right is the Health chart, a place to record wounds.

You simply fill in the dots in order to record your ratings on various Traits. Dots are considered to be permanent records of the rating of a Trait — it can go up, but rarely does it go down. Fill in dots like you would the ovals of a standardized test. On the other hand, squares are for temporary records of where a Trait is at — they go up and down frequently. Only use a check mark in boxes.

By the way, you will find a full-page character sheet at the back of this book. You are free to photocopy it and use it in your Chronicle (for personal use only).



They cannot fully know love, but he makes her his Queen and they rule the city together.

VAMPIRE™

Name: Malcom
Player: Lisa
Chronicle: Chicago
Nature: Loner
Demeanor: Fanatic
Clan: Gangrel
Generation: 13th
Haven: rented apartment
Concept: Narcotics Cop

Attributes

Physical

Strength ●●OOO
Dexterity Athletic ●●●●O
Stamina ●●OOO

Social

Charisma ●●OOO
Manipulation ●●●OO
Appearance ●OOOO

Mental

Perception ●●●OO
Intelligence ●●●OO
Wits Quick-thinker ●●●●O

Abilities

Talents

Acting OOOOO
Alertness ●●OOO
Athletics ●●OOO
Brawl ●●●OO
Dodge ●OOOO
Empathy OOOOO
Intimidation OOOOO
Leadership OOOOO
Streetwise ●●●OO
Subterfuge ●●OOO

Skills

Animal Ken OOOOO
Drive ●●OOO
Etiquette OOOOO
Firearms ●●●OO
Melee ●●OOO
Music OOOOO
Repair OOOOO
Security OOOOO
Stealth ●●OOO
Survival ●OOOO

Knowledge

Bureaucracy OOOOO
Computer OOOOO
Finance OOOOO
Investigation ●●●OO
Law ●●OOO
Linguistics OOOOO
Medicine OOOOO
Occult OOOOO
Politics OOOOO
Science OOOOO

Advantages

Disciplines

Athletic ●●●OO
Celerity ●OOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Backgrounds

Contacts ●●OOO
Influence ●●OOO
Resources ●OOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Virtues

Conscience ●●OOO
Self-Control ●●●●●
Courage ●●●●O

Other Traits:

_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage
Revolver	7	4

Humanity

● ● ● ● ● ● ● O O O

Willpower

● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● O O

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Blood Pool

● ● ● ● ● ● O O O O

Health

Bruised ☐
Hurt -1 ☐
Injured -2 ☐
Wounded -3 ☐
Mauled -4 ☐
Crippled -5 ☐
Incapacitated ☐

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

you've succeeded; if there are any ones left, you've botched. If there aren't any ones or successes left, you've failed.

Automatic Success

Strong as I am
There's something about this thing that scares me.
Strong as I am
There's something about this thing that dares me.

– The Prime Movers, *Strong As I Am*

You don't want to be continually rolling dice all the time as it can get in the way of the roleplaying. **Vampire** employs a very simple system for automatic successes so that players do not have to make rolls for actions which their characters could perform in their sleep.

It works like this. If the number of dice you have in your Dice Pool is equal to or greater than the difficulty, then you succeed automatically. It is considered the equivalent of only getting one success, so sometimes a player will want to roll anyway in order to attempt to gain even more successes. But for very simple and oft repeated actions, automatic successes can eliminate a lot of wasted time.

The automatic success rules can be used to completely eliminate dice rolling, something you will want to do during live-action roleplaying. In such situations, automatic successes aren't a matter of choice. Either you are good enough to succeed or you are not. It is simple, but so was Cops & Robbers and we liked it just fine. The story was what was important and the rules didn't matter.

This simple system even has a twist, making it not quite so black and white. A Willpower point can be used to earn an automatic success. You won't want to do this often, but on certain actions it can be very advantageous to do so. Of course, the Willpower only counts for one success if multiple successes are required.

When we play, we usually use a combination of dice rolling and automatic successes. During most scenes — especially when we're deep into the story — we don't even roll dice, preferring to roleplay through them without interruptions. However, when we get in the mood for *playing-a-game*, rather then *telling-a-story*, we switch to making lots of dice rolls and using many complications to the rules.

Nightmares have grown to whispers and whispers to open voices in the marketplace.

Complications

Confusion will be my epitaph,
As I cross the cracked and broken path,
If we make it we can all sit back and laugh,
But I fear tomorrow I'll be crying.

– King Crimson, *Epitaph*

You may have already realized that it is quite easy to get a single success, even when you are rolling only one or two dice. You have a 65% chance for a marginal success when you are rolling two dice and the difficulty is 6. While that may sound too easy, there is more to this dice system to complicate matters.

There are a number of different ways to complicate the rolls, some of them are discussed below. For troupes heavily into roleplaying, simple rolls and automatic successes are enough. Generally, you use a complication if you or the players want a break from the roleplaying, if you want to roll a few dice, or if you want to make a game out of the scene. Complications can add drama to the story and create a depth of passion and focus.

Specific systems of complications have been developed completely in the Drama Chapter. However, below are the basic complications that can be employed in **Vampire**.

Extended Action

In order to succeed fully, a character will sometimes need more than one success — she will need to accumulate

three, or seven, or even twenty successes (on rare occasions). When you only need to get one success to accomplish your action, it's called a simple action. When you need to get more than one success to get a marginal success, it's called an extended action. Extended actions are not uncommon, but simple actions are the ones most frequently made.

In an extended action, you will roll over and over again on subsequent turns in an attempt to collect enough successes to succeed. For instance, you're climbing a tree and the Storyteller announces that when you get a total of seven successes, you've climbed to the top. You'll get there eventually, but of course the more times you roll, the more chances you have to botch and injure yourself. If you are attempting to climb down the tree because it was on fire, the amount of time it takes becomes exceedingly important.

During an extended action, you can keep trying to get successes for as long as you want, or at least until you fail to get even one success. If you botch, you may have to start over from scratch, with no accumulated successes. The Storyteller may not let you try again at all.

Because of the dramatic effect that extended actions provide the story, they are used frequently in the systems described in the Drama chapter. However, this type of action is more complicated than a simple action and should not often be employed in the middle of intense roleplaying. As the Storyteller, it will be your decision as to what type of action to call for. A little bit of experience will serve you well when employing these rules.

Resisted Actions

Sometimes you will make an action in opposition to one made by another character. Both of you will make rolls, with a difficulty often indicated by a Trait of the other player, and the person who gets the most successes succeeds. However, you are considered to get only as many successes as the amount by which you exceed your opponent's successes. The opponent's successes eliminate your own, just as ones do. Therefore, it is very difficult, and rare, to get an outstanding success on a resisted action. Even if your opponent cannot beat you, he can diminish the effect of your efforts. On actions that are both extended and resisted, the opponents must collect a certain number of successes in order to completely succeed. Each success above the opponent's total number of successes in a single turn is added to a success total. The first to collect the designated number of successes wins the contest.

Teamwork

Sometimes characters can work together to collect successes, most often during an extended action. At the discretion of the Storyteller, two or more characters can all make rolls separately and add together their successes. They may never add

Many voices speak out against the new Queen, for they think she will bear their god-King children.

together their separate Traits into one roll though. Teamwork is effective in some circumstances, such as in combat, shadowing prey, collecting information, and repairing devices. In others it can be counter-effective, such as in many social actions (where it can be confusing to the subject).

The chart below may serve to clear up your confusion on some of the different types of rolls that can be made.

Try it Out

So slide over here
And give me a moment.
Your moves are so raw
I've got to let you know
You're one of my kind.

– INXS, *I Need You Tonight*

Action	*Example*	*Description*
Simple	Firearms Perception roll	Task is completed with one roll. The Storyteller announces the difficulty and the players roll their dice. Automatic success is possible.
Extended	Running Research Track	Task is completed when a given number of successes are obtained, which may require more than one roll (thus providing more chances to botch).
Resisted	Shadowing Melee	A contest of skill between two individuals. They compare their number of successes and the one with the highest number succeeds.
Extended & Resisted	Arm Wrestling	Two individules compete as in resisted action, but before one can claim success he must accumulate a certain number of successes.

Well, that's it. Those are the rules. This system for rolling dice is all you really need to know to play this game. Everything else is just clarifications and exceptions to these rules. As long as you understand what's been discussed here, you won't have any difficulty understanding anything else. If you don't think you've caught everything, just read it over again and you'll find it will make more sense the second time around.

Now go ahead and make a few rolls, using the example character from the other page. Malcolm is attempting to jump from the roof of one building to the roof of another, a distance of 15 feet across. The Storyteller decides that the action has a difficulty of seven. Take four dice because of Malcolm's Dexterity of four, and two dice because of his Athletics rating of two. You should now have six dice in your hand — that's a lot. You don't have much chance of failing, but go ahead and roll; you never know. Look to see how many successes you have, making sure to take away a success for every "one" you roll. Did you make it, or did you botch? Try a few other actions on your own. The more successes you get, the better you land. Only one success might mean that you jumped to the other roof, but are hanging on by your fingers (which would require more rolls to see if Malcolm managed to keep hanging on and climb up to the roof).

Next, try out an example of an extended and resisted action. An example of this is an arm wrestling match. This is overly complicated for something that isn't all that interesting, but it shows you what you can do using this game system. It is an indefinite series of rolls, each using a different Trait and requiring different difficulties. A character needs to accumulate 5 successes more than their opponent in order to finally win. A botch eliminates all of your accumulated successes.

• First roll: Each player rolls Strength, at a difficulty equal to the opponent's Dexterity + 3 (speed is important at first).

• Second and Third roll: Each player rolls Strength, difficulty is the opponent's Strength +3.

• Fourth roll (and all subsequent ones): Each player rolls Strength, difficulty is the opponent's Willpower.

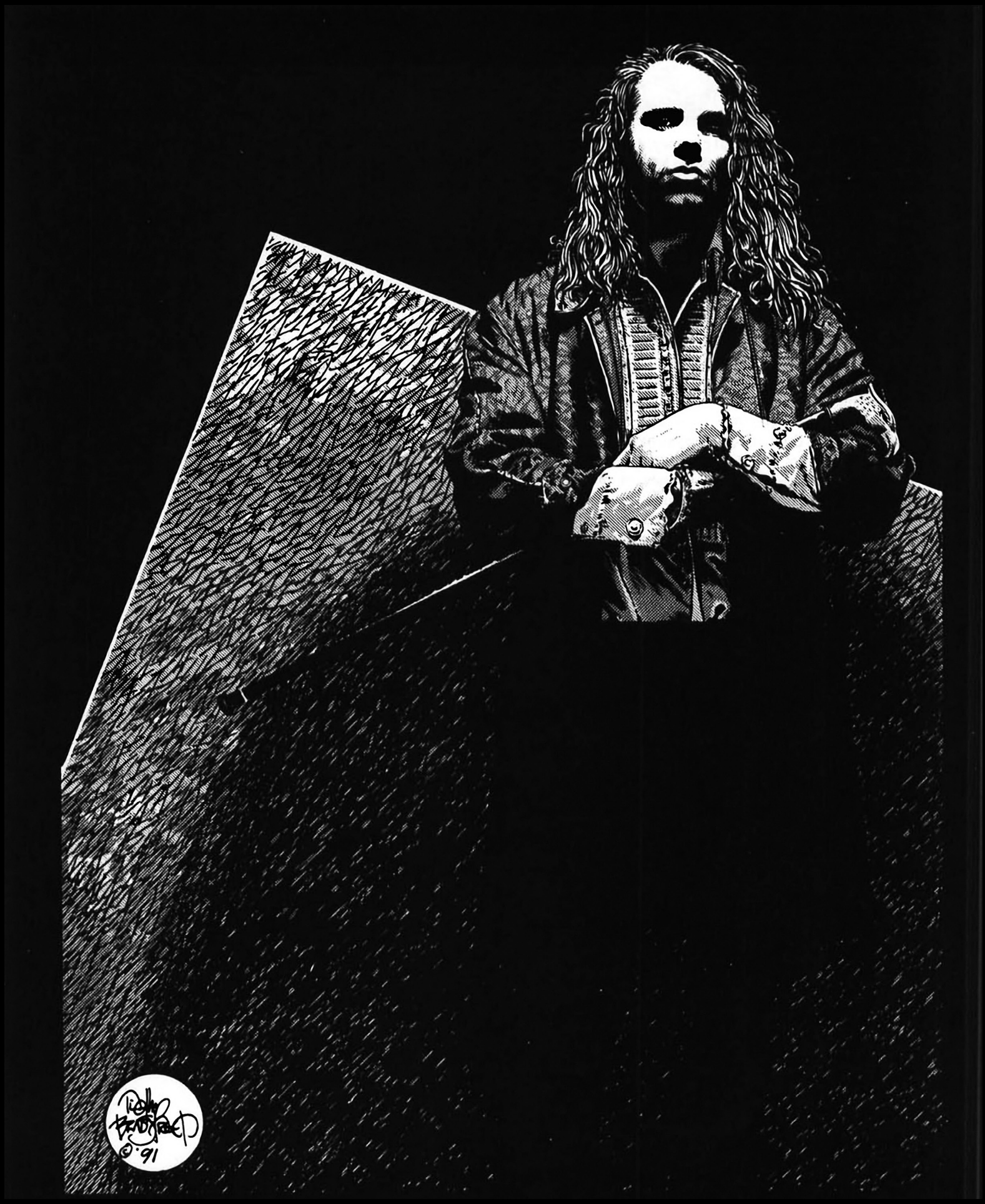
Game Terms

Words used by the players

- **Ability:** These are Traits that describe what a character knows and has learned, rather than what they are. Abilities are Traits such as Intimidation, Firearms and Finance.
- **Action:** An action is the performance of a deed, which is a consciously-willed, physical, social or mental activity. When players announce that their characters are doing something, they are taking an action.

- **Advantage:** This is a catchall category, describing the mystical Disciplines, Background and Virtues of a character.
- **Attribute:** These are Traits that describe what a character is inherently. Attributes are such things as Strength, Charisma and Intelligence.
- **Blood Pool:** This is a measure of how much blood a Vampire has in her system.
- **Botch:** A disastrous failure, indicated by rolling more "one's" than successes.
- **Character:** Each player creates a character, an individual whom they roleplay over the course of the Chronicle. Though "character" could imply any individual, in **Vampire** it is usually used to describe the player characters.
- **Demeanor:** The personality that a character pretends to have, the persona they present to the world.
- **Dice Pool:** This describes the dice you have in your hand after adding together your different Traits. It is the maximum number of dice you can roll in one turn, though you can divide them among different actions.
- **Difficulty:** This is a number from 2-10 measuring the difficulty of an action that a character takes. The player needs to roll that number or higher on the dice rolled.
- **Disciplines:** The mystical powers of a Vampire.
- **Down Time:** The time spent between Scenes, where no roleplaying is done and turns are not used. Actions might be made, or the Storyteller might give some descriptions, but generally time passes quickly.
- **Extended Action:** An action that requires a certain number of successes for the character to actually succeed.
- **Health:** This is a measure of the degree to which a character is wounded or injured.
- **Humanity:** A measure of the gulf that separates humans from Vampires. It indicates how human a character remains.
- **Nature:** This is a description of the archetypical personality of a character. It describes who they really are at the core of their person.
- **Rating:** A number describing the value of a Trait, most often a number from 1-5, though sometimes a number from 1-10.
- **Resisted Action:** An action that two different characters take against each other. Both compare their number of successes and the character with the most wins.
- **Scene:** A single episode of the story; a time and place where actions and events take place moment by moment. A Scene is often a dramatic high-point of the story.
- **Simple Action:** An action that requires the player to get only one success to succeed, though more successes indicate a better done job.
- **Storyteller:** The person who creates and guides the story by assuming the roles of all characters not taken by the players and determining all events beyond the control of the players.
- **System:** A specific set of complications used in a certain situation. Rules to help guide the rolling of dice to create dramatic action.
- **Trait:** A Trait describes any Attribute, Ability, Advantage or other character index that can be described as a number (in terms of dots).
- **Troupe:** The group of players, including the Storyteller, who play Vampire — often on a regular basis.
- **Willpower:** One of the most important Traits is Willpower. It measures the self-confidence and self-control of a character. However, Willpower works differently than most Traits — it is usually used up, rather than rolled.

> *The inquiry of truth, which is the love making, or wooing of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign good of human nature.*
>
> – Francis Bacon, *Of Truth*



Toreador (tôr' ē - ă -dôr')

Chapter Three: Character

All the world's a stage
And all men and women merely players
They have their exits and entrances
And one man in his time plays many parts.

– William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*

Before you can begin to play **Vampire**, you must create your character. However, unlike make-believe, you don't just make up a character as you go along (though the Storyteller is faced with this challenge regularly). Instead, you've got to make a character *before* you begin to play. There is a certain amount of work involved — characters are created, not born. It is a creative struggle to build a compelling, complete, yet honest character. It is a challenging task even for the most experienced of us.

This chapter describes how to create a unique character, starting with a general concept and translating it into numbers that can be used in the game. It provides guidelines for the Storyteller, who can in turn guide the players in the creation of their characters. This process is very simple and the players can probably figure it out for themselves by reading the briefing sheets included in the Appendix (which you can photocopy). However, the Storyteller should have a good grasp of the process to be able to answer questions accurately and succinctly.

No dice rolls are involved in this character creation system; it is all a process of player selection. The characters are described by three categories of Traits: Attributes, Abilities and Advantages. A Trait is usually a number from 1-5, such as Dexterity 3, or Dodge 2. One is poor and a five is the best you can get. Besides equipment and possessions, there is really no other aspect of the character that will come into play — the Traits are pre-eminent, so remember to choose wisely.

These numbers may not seem like much of a character to you. It is hard to imagine a novelist describing a character by writing, "His silver tongue must have meant he had a Charisma of four." However, these ratings make it simple and easy to describe the strengths and weaknesses of a character. In one quick look, you can get a good idea of what she is like. More importantly, it means that the random factor created by dice can be employed in relation to the character's Traits. If you are strong, you have *more* of a chance to break the door down than if you are weak.

Character creation is not unlike cooking. You've got to gather the ingredients, stir and whip them together, and then let it bake for a few hours. You start with a character sheet and a pen or pencil. Then you need to decide what kind of character you want. Are you going to be a street-hardened punk, or a rich and somewhat spoiled ex-debutante? Were you college educated, or tutored in life somewhere in the Appalachian Mountains? The background and personality of your character are the essential ingredients of his persona. Without a general concept of what your character is like, the numbers that you choose won't make any sense.

You go from the general to the specific. First, you use your general concept of who and what your character is — are you more socially or mentally developed? — and then get specific by selecting the ratings of your Traits — what is your Charisma, Manipulation and Appearance? Do not use this process as a chance to create the best character possible as that defeats the whole idea of making up a really interesting character. These numbers are intended to be an aid to roleplaying, not an avenue to some mythical Hall of Fame.

Getting Started

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting
And cometh from afar.

— Wordsworth, *Ode. Intimations of Immortality*

As the Storyteller, you are going to have to guide the players through the character generation process. After your players arrive for the game session, you need to introduce them to the basic premise of the game, as well as describe the rules system. Below are five concepts you need to explain to them before you begin.

- You can create a character of any age from any culture or nation. You start the game as a fairly young Vampire, and more than likely you only recently left the tutelage of your Sire. In any case, you have been a Vampire for only 50 years or less. Your apparent age is your age when you "died." You know little of Vampire society or Vampire life, except what you have been told by your Sire, the Vampire who created you.
- This character creation system is a purchase system and there are no die rolls (save one). By choosing Traits from a variety of lists, you decide who your character will be. You will get extra points, called "freebies," at the end of the process, so don't agonize over all your choices.
- A Trait of 1 is poor and a trait of 5 is superb, so if you only have one dot on something, you are either not very good or only a beginner. These are based on the human range, as a Vampire's special powers are defined by Disciplines and the use of Blood Points.
- This character creation process was designed as much to help you define your character as it was to provide you with a means to interact with the rules. The process of creating the character, picking your strong and weak points starting with the general and going to the specific, will help you sharpen the concept of your character.
- It is your responsibility to create a character who fits into the group. If you don't get along with the others and disrupt the story negatively because of it, you will have to create a new character. Life as a Vampire is far too dangerous for antagonisms to exist in a Brood; in order to survive, you need to work together.

Now pass out the character sheets, and give the players a minute to look them over and ask questions about them. You have permission to photocopy the sample character sheet (but for personal use only) found in the Appendix.

You may also photocopy the "Character Creation" sheet from the back of the book (for personal use only), to use as an aid throughout the process. If the players can refer to this sheet and listen to your explanations at the same time, they'll understand how it works a lot more quickly.

Character Creation Outline

Step One: ***Character Concept: Who are you?***

- **Identify Concept: Who were you, what have you become?**
- **Choose Clan: What is your Vampire Lineage?**
- **Choose Nature and Demeanor (Optional): What is your Personality?**

Step Two: ***Select Attributes: What are your basic capabilities?***

- **Prioritize your 3 Categories: Primary 7. Secondary 5. Tertiary 3.**
- Choose Physical Traits: Strength, Stamina & Dexterity
- Choose Social Traits: Charisma, Manipulation & Appearance
- Choose Mental Traits: Perception, Intelligence & Wits

Step Three: ***Select Abilities: What do you know?***

- **Prioritize your 3 Categories: Primary 13. Secondary 9. Tertiary 5.**
- Choose Talents: Your innate, intuitive Abilities.
- Choose Skills: Your trained Abilities.
- Choose Knowledges: Abilities you study and memorize.

Step Four: ***Select Advantages: In what ways are you unique?***

- **Choose Disciplines: Limited by what Clan was chosen (3).**
- **Choose Background Traits: May be limited by Chronicle concept (5).**
- **Choose Virtues: Conscience. Self-Control & Courage (7).**

Step Five: ***Last Touches: Filling in the all important details.***

- **Record base Willpower = your Courage rating.**
- **Record base Humanity = your Conscience + Self-Control ratings.**
- **Record Blood Pool = roll a ten sided die, record result.**
- **Spend your 15 "Freebie" points to raise any Trait (cost: 7/5/2/1).**

Step 1) Character Concept

Each person is many persons: a multitude made into one person; a corporate body; incorporated, a corporation... the unity of a person is as real, or unreal, as the unity of the corporation.

— N.O. Brown.

Before you write a single thing down, you need to develop a concept for your character. It only needs to be a general idea of what your character will be like, something unique and interesting that will be enjoyable to play over the long term. This involves choosing a Clan (the Lineage of Vampires from which the character descends) as well as the personality of the character, described by choosing their Nature and Demeanor.

The better you can interrelate these three aspects of your character, the more intricate and complete it will be. Often the Demeanor of a character will be completely different than their actual Nature, and the stereotypical image of a Clan can be contradicted with great effect by choosing the Nature and Demeanor carefully.

Though short lists are given in this chapter, complete descriptions of the Clans and the Archetypes can be found in the Traits chapter.

Concepts:

- Working Joe — driver, farmer, servant, wage slave, secretary
- Kid — child, runaway, student, high schooler
- Soldier — mercenary, elite army squad, Ex-GI, SWAT
- Politician — any type of elected or appointed public official
- Drifter—wanderer, hobo, homeless person, cowboy, rancher, prostitute
- Investigator — police, FBI, detective, cop, secret agent
- Outsider—Tribal, Third World, Communist, Moslem, Native American
- Gang Member — motorcycle, street, 90's drug gang
- Professional — engineer, doctor, teacher, scholar, mortician, entrepreneur
- Entertainer — comic, soap opera queen, movie star, night club singer
- Dilettante — idle rich, artist, writer, intellectual, gambler, college student
- Punk — musician, club crawler, stud dog
- Criminal — prisoner, mafia, cat burglar, drug dealer, drug runner
- Reporter — TV, newspaper, paparazzo, photo journalist

• **Concept:** The first step is to come up with an overall concept of who the character is: what they do, how they live, and what is unique about them. Decide who and what your character was before they became a Vampire. Above are a few ideas of some different Concepts you can choose. These are either things your character once was or still is. Later, when you choose your Backgrounds, your Concept can be very important.

• **Clan:** The next step, and arguably the most important element of character conception, is to pick your character's Clan. This indicates what Lineage the character inherits — you always gain the Lineage of your Sire. The seven Clans from which the players can choose are all members of the Camarilla. There are others, but they exist either in their own sects or on the outskirts of Kindred society.

A player, however, does not necessarily need to choose a Clan, for some younger Vampires are of such diluted blood that the characteristics of any single Clan have not been imprinted upon them. These "Caitiff" are increasingly common among the Kindred, but they are outcasts — accepted by none, scorned by all. If you wish such a character, simply write in "Caitiff" as your Clan. Caitiffs allow you greater choice when you pick your Disciplines initially, but later on, it will be more expensive to raise your Disciplines using experience points.

They attack the palace to force their King to be rid of his Queen, but their resentment quickly becomes rage.

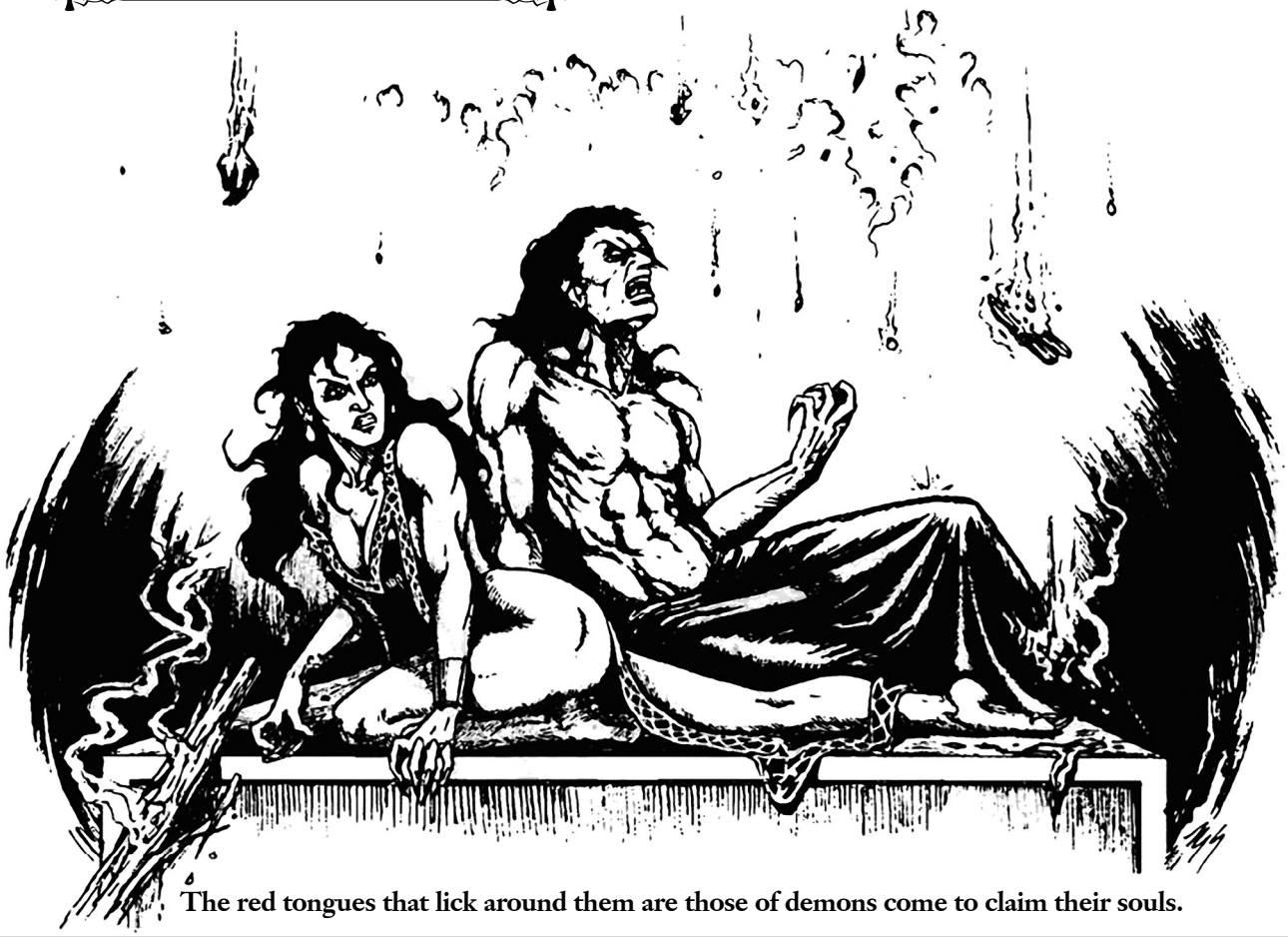
Clans:

- **Nosferatu:** These hideous creatures are ostracized and misunderstood by most of the other Clans.
- **Tremere:** Warlocks who have sprung from an ancient power, they are the most tightly bound and hierarchical Clan.
- **Ventrue**: Sophisticates of a rarified taste. These conservative and calculating Vampires are the leaders of the Camarilla.
- **Gangrel**: Loners and rustics, they are known as the outlanders. They are the Vampires who can shapeshift most often.
- **Toreador:** Though known for their hedonistic ways, they prefer to think of themselves as artists. Only those who are "worthy" are taken.
- **Brujah**: These rebels are the strongest supporters of the Anarchs (young rebels). They respect no authority and acknowledge no leaders.
- **Malkavian**: Though the others believe them completely insane, the members of this Clan possess an uncanny wisdom and vision.
- **Caitiff:** You have no Clan, but are an outcast. Among the Kindred, you are clearly a second class citizen.

Clans are discussed in the Traits chapter, starting on page 67. Clans and Caitiffs are also detailed in the Setting chapter on page 178.

• **Nature**: (Optional). At this point, you must choose an Archetype that suits your base conception of the true Nature of your character. There are 20 different Archetypes to choose from. This is the most dominant aspect of your character's true personality, but not necessarily the only Archetype that may apply. The Archetype you choose for your character's Nature provides the primary way in which he can regain Willpower into his Willpower pool. Choosing a Nature helps you describe who your character is on the inside.

• **Demeanor:** (Optional). Now you can choose an Archetype to describe the personality you pretend to possess. This is the role you play to the world, the facade you present to it. It should probably be different from the Archetype you have already chosen as your Nature, but whatever you choose is only your typical pose, as people can change Demeanor as quickly as they change mood. You may change your Demeanor at anytime, to suit different people and different situations. However, the longer a character



The red tongues that lick around them are those of demons come to claim their souls.

has been a Vampire, the less their Demeanor changes and the more it should remain static. Demeanor has no practical effect on the rules.

Archetypes:

(Complete descriptions can be found on page 77)

- Architect — You're unhappy unless you are creating something of lasting value.
- Bon Vivant — Life has no meaning, so have fun while it lasts.
- Bravo — You are a bully and do not tolerate those who cross you.
- Caregiver — Many need your love and protection, and you need them to need you.
- Cavalier — You are guided by your sense of duty and personal honor.
- Child — Having never grown up, you still have the temperament of a child.
- Conformist — A follower at heart, you find it easy to adapt, adjust and comply.
- Conniver — Why work when you can get something for nothing?
- Curmudgeon — You are a real sourpuss and cynic of the Nth degree.
- Deviant — You just don't fit in, a real weirdo. But what kind of deviant are you?
- Director—You hate chaos and are forever taking charge to set things right.
- Fanatic — You have a cause and it dominates your life.
- Gallant — You are as flamboyant as you are amoral.
- Jester — Always the fool, you can't take life seriously... death either.
- Judge — You seek justice and struggle to promote it however you can.
- Loner — You are forever alone, even in a crowd.
- Martyr — You are forever sacrificing your own needs and desires for others.
- Plotter — You carefully plan out everything to the last detail. Nothing is left to chance.
- Rebel — No need for a cause, you rebel out of habit and passion.
- Survivor — You tenaciously cling to 'life,' and struggle toward a better future.
- Traditionalist — You are orthodox, conservative and somewhat reactionary
- Visionary—There is more to this frame of existence than most ever realize.

Step 2) Choosing Attributes

I am what I am, and I don't think Betty Ford takes Vampires.
— Nick Knight

Now you get to start assigning numbers, the first step of which is to determine your character's basic Attributes. The Attributes are everything which a character naturally, intrinsically is. How strong are you? How quick are your reflexes? How good are you at persuasion?

First, you must prioritize the three different categories of your character's Attributes — Physical, Mental and Social. You must decide which you are best in (primary) which you are average in (secondary) and which category you are poor in (tertiary). Are you more Physical than you are Social or are you smarter than you are brawny?

- Physical Attributes are everything that has anything to do with physical effort. They describe how strong, dextrous and

He is ancient, but his Bloodline is as paper in a flame.

sturdy your character is, and are the primary Attributes of an action-oriented character. Physical Attributes concern only the strengths and weaknesses of the body. Is your character powerful, quick-footed or heavily-built?

- Social Attributes describe your character's Appearance, Demeanor and Charisma. Social Attributes are vital in determining first impressions, leadership ability, and the nature of your interactions with others. Is your character charming, well-spoken or good-looking?
- The Mental Attributes represent your character's mental capacity, and include such things as memory, perception and the ability to learn and think. Is your character insightful, astute or clever?

The Concept and Clan of your character may suggest to you what your priorities should be, but feel free to pick any way you please. For now, your character conception should be in the broadest of perspectives — you can get more specific in just a moment.

Your selection determines how many "dots" you get to spend in each category. It indicates which category of Attributes you get to add seven dots to (you get one free dot in each Attribute), which you get to add five extra dots to, and the one in which you only get to add three extra dots to. Thus you may choose to add seven dots to your Physical Attributes, five to your Mental and only three dots to your Social Attributes. You could assign all three of your Social Attribute dots to your Charisma, one dot to each of the three Social Attributes, or two dots on one and one dot on another.

Later in the character creation process, it is possible to increase these ratings, so don't sweat it too much right now.

Rays from the sun pierce her body like lances, but she struggles on.

Choosing Attributes

Primary:	7 dots
Secondary:	5 dots
Tertiary:	3 dots

Note: The space after each Attribute (and Ability) is for you to fill in a specialty, a subclassification of the Trait where you excel. You will do so later on during the course of the story. For now, concentrate on choosing your ratings.

Step 3) Choosing Abilities

Between two worlds life hovers like a star,
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge.
How little do we know that which we are!
How less what we may be!

— Lord Byron, *Don Juan*

Abilities represent what you can do beyond the outline provided by your Attributes. They are what you know and what you have learned rather than what you are. All mundane Skills, Talents and Knowledges are covered in this area.

Each Ability that you have is assigned a rating representing your expertise. The number is used as a bonus to die rolls when you attempt to use that Ability. This section of the rules guides you in determining what Abilities you have and how high or low each Ability is rated.

Abilities are divided into three different categories: Talents, Skills and Knowledges. Each type of Ability has different characteristics.

- Talents describe all the intuitive Abilities. Talents do not need to be trained and cannot be studied or learned from a book; they are most often gained through direct experience. Is your character self-taught or possess a lot of common sense?
- Skills are the Abilities that are learned through rigorous training of any sort. They are any Ability that must be learned step by step through actual practice, but can be taught and studied (unlike Talents). Is your character good at picking up things from day to day practice?
- Knowledges include all the Abilities that require the rigorous application of the mind. These are the Abilities generally learned through school and classes, books and teachers, but can also be picked up through experience. Is your character educated or have a good memory?

You must categorize these Abilities in the same way you categorized the Attributes. You must decide how to rank your Talents, Skills and Knowledges, choosing in which you will be above average (primary), in which you will be average (secondary), and in which will be below average (tertiary).

You get 13 dots for your primary category, 9 for your secondary category, and only 5 dots for your tertiary category. However, there is one additional restriction: you cannot give your character more than three dots in any one Ability. However, in Step 5, you can use your "Freebie" points to gain a fourth or fifth level Ability.

Choosing Abilities

Primary:	13 dots
Secondary:	9 dots
Tertiary:	5 dots

As she slips away into Final Death, Shelzza is pulled downward into the earth.

Step 4) Advantages

His ardour smoulders • Phosphorous flies
He radiates with urgency to hypnotize
Stoke the furnace • Feed his need
This thirst for fire is all he sees

— Siouxsie and the Banshees, *Burn Up*

You do not prioritize or rank your three categories of Advantages. Instead you have a designated number of points to spend in each one. Though this number is fixed, you can purchase additional dots in Step 5 using your "Freebie" points.

Disciplines	3 dots
Backgrounds	5 dots
Virtues	7 dots

The peace she finds while encased in the ground reassures her. She dreams of her King, her passion.

Disciplines: After characters first become Vampires, they gain mystical Disciplines, which do much to describe their Vampiric powers. Disciplines are the mystic arts of the Vampires and work in ways not completely of this world. You have only three points to select with, and may only choose Disciplines that your Clan is especially proficient with (Clan Disciplines). See the Clans section of the Traits chapter to find out what your character's Clan Disciplines are. If you are a Caitiff and have no Clan, you can put your three points on any Disciplines you would like.

Players are urged to be cautious when they choose Disciplines, for these powers are central to a Vampire character. Three points isn't a whole lot, but characters should start out weak, and Disciplines can be raised during the Chronicle.

- **Animalism:** The Discipline of communicating with and controlling animals.
- **Auspex**: Awareness, premonitions and extrasensory perception.
- **Celerity:** Supernatural quickness, allowing multiple actions in one turn.
- **Dominate:** Piercing gaze, mind control and mesmerization.
- **Fortitude:** Describes the supernatural toughness of the character.
- **Obfuscate:** Ability to remain obscure and unseen, even among crowds.
- **Potence**: The Discipline of Strength and power.
- **Presence:** Your ability to control, attract and sway crowds of people.
- **Protean:** The ability to shapechange, grow claws and meld with the earth.
- **Thaumaturgy**: The Discipline of magical force.

Backgrounds: Every character also gets five points to spread among the various Background Traits. You have only five points to select with, and in some Chronicles you may only choose certain Backgrounds, so ask the Storyteller if there are any restrictions in the Chronicle. These Traits should fit into the general scheme of the Concept originally chosen.

Sometimes the Storyteller will not want you to select Backgrounds until the prelude, when the various choices for Backgrounds will become more clear in light of the developing character. Ask your Storyteller to see if you should wait, or pick your Backgrounds immediately.

- **Allies:** Humans who will help and support you, usually family or friends.
- **Contacts:** Describes how many contacts you have among the mortals.
- **Fame:** Your fame in the mortal world — this is your mass media influence.
- **Generation:** Describes what Generation of Kindred you are.
- **Herd:** The number of Vessels you have readily available.
- **Influence:** Your mundane power within mortal society.
- **Mentor:** Describes an Elder (your Sire?) who looks after you.
- **Resources:** Describes how wealthy you are.
- **Retainers:** The number of your followers, some of them are perhaps Ghouls.
- **Status:** Your station in Vampire society.

Virtues: Virtues are fundamental to a **Vampire** character, for they describe the moral strengths of your character and each is used in a different situation. Conscience, Self-Control, and Courage are rolled to see if the character can resist the urge to Frenzy, such as at the sight or smell of blood, or where the character may instinctively run away (like from sunlight or open flames). The Virtues are also important factors in determining whether Humanity is lost or not, after an inhuman action has been taken.

You get 7 points to assign to the three Virtue Traits, though you automatically get one dot in each of them. Your Virtues help determine what your character's Humanity and Willpower will be, so you may want to be especially careful. Later you may wish to use you "Freebie" points to purchase a higher rating in some of your Virtue Traits — see Step 5.

The past has lost its edge and her memories are all of her King. Powers gained over centuries of sleeping have made her bold again.

Step 5) Last Touches

What is the worst of woes that wait on age?
What Stamps the Wrinkle deeper on the brow?
To view each loved one blotted from life's page,
And be alone on earth as I am now.

— Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

Sometimes the most important stage of character creation is applying the finishing touches, the little changes and additions that complete the character. In Step 5 you gain your fifteen "Freebie" points, enabling you to add more dots to your Attributes, Abilities and Advantages as well as to the all-important Willpower and Humanity. In this way, dots may be added to almost any rating on the character sheet. However, first you must determine what your basic values are for your Willpower, Humanity and Blood Pool.

She cares little that the Crusaders hold Tripoli — mortal affairs are of little consequence to her.

Willpower: Your character's beginning Willpower is determined by her Courage rating. You should probably raise it even further by using Freebie points. Willpower is essential for controlling the actions of your character, especially in times of stress when your predator instincts emerge. Willpower is also vital for resisting Domination and employing the Discipline of Thaumaturgy.

Humanity: Your character's initial Humanity it determined by his Conscience + Self-Control ratings. However, it is wise to purchase a higher Humanity by spending Freebie points. Humanity is critical for determining how far your character has degenerated into bestiality. A character with no Humanity is no longer a player character.

Blood Pool: The crowning touch of character generation is determining how large a Blood Pool the character has at the start of the game. The Blood Pool indicates essentially how much "energy" the character has — it is the life force of a Vampire. Simply roll a ten-sided die and the result is how many Blood Points you have. This is the only die roll that will be made during the character creation process. The irony of a Vampire's existence is not confined to the story alone.

Freebie Points: You get fifteen points to buy Traits anywhere on the character sheet. However, it's not as straight-forward as it might seem. If you want to add a dot to an Attribute, each one costs five Freebie points, while a Background dot costs only one point. Costs are listed on the chart below. You can buy any Discipline (even ones that are not listed as a Clan Discipline).

"Point Pool" Costs	
Disciplines (any)	7 points per dot
Attributes	5 points per dot
Abilities	2 points per dot
Virtues	2 points per dot
Backgrounds	1 point per dot
Willpower	1 point per dot
Humanity	1 point per dot

Spark of Life

This living hand, now warm and capable
Of earnest grasping, would, if it were cold
And in the icy silence of the tomb.
So haunt thy days and chill thy dreaming nights
That thou would wish thine own heart dry of blood
So in my veins red life might stream again,
And thou be conscience-calm'd — see here it is —
I hold it toward you.

— Keats, *Lines to Fanny Brawne*

There are other aspects of a character that can be detailed in addition to all you have done already. You should not necessarily write these things down, but you should certainly think about them, not only now but throughout the career of your character.

• **Contacts:** Make a list of your character's primary and secondary Contacts (if any) on the back of your character sheet. All you need is the name of the Contact, details on where and how they work, and what kind of assistance they might be good for. See page 105 for more details.

• **Retainers:** Detail what kind of Retainers your character possesses if you have selected such as one of your Backgrounds. Each Retainer is a loyal servant who will steadfastly serve your character. Ask yourself these questions about your Retainers: How do you secure their loyalty? Do you Dominate them? Does your presence overpower them? Have you befriended them? Do they owe you for something? What are their special skills? What do they do during the daylight? Are they ghouls or do you feed from them? See page 107 for more details.

• **Specialties:** You may wish to give your character Specialties from the start. Though most players select Specialties for their Traits during play, you can pick them immediately. Specialties are adjectives which help to more precisely define what your character is especially good at. You simply fill in the space behind the Trait with an appropriate Specialty, suggestions are made with each Trait in the Traits chapter. Though mostly used for roleplaying, Specialties can give you a bonus to rolls or assist you in other ways. What effects they have on play is up to the Storyteller. See page 67 for more details.

• **Haven:** Where does your character live? Where does she hide during the day? Some Kindred have an actual home in which they reside, while others have a special part of the sewers where they like to lie. Others have many secret places where they might spend the day.

• **Feeding Ground:** It is likely that your character will have regular sources of food near his Haven. As long as a character is near his Haven, he can feed without requiring a roll or any roleplaying. But you need to detail this source of blood. Does he feed from the inmates of the asylum? Go club hopping every night? Or do children come over to his house each evening for piano lessons?

• **Equipment:** If you want to spend money right away to buy equipment, you may do so now. You may buy weapons, clothing, homes, condos, cars, anything — use an appropriate catalogue for prices. As the Storyteller, let those who have the time do as much work as they want, but don't punish those who don't. Just have them make a Resource roll during play to see if they have access to such things.

• **Appearance:** Your character's appearance makes her Traits visible to the other characters. You should turn the relevant Traits of your characters — such as the Social Attributes and Concepts — into aspects of her appearance. High Intelligence can become a clear, piercing gaze. A Dilettante Concept could mean she wears stylish and expensive clothes. In this way, you can make your character's Traits more tangible and interesting. It's better roleplaying to say, "There always seems to be a sneer of disdain on my face," than to say, "You can tell I'm very disdainful."

• **Quirks:** By giving your character quirks, interesting personal details and anecdotes, you can add a great deal of depth and interest. Write a few sentences on the back of your character sheet about the strange and possibly interesting things that define your character. A quirk could be a twisted sense of humor, a gentleness toward animals, or a habit of grunting when answering yes to a question.

• **Motivations:** Your character's primary motivation is central to understanding who and what he is. After he ceases

King Philip II comands his army to advance.

being human, a Vampire's priorities and standards often change, usually drastically. Things that were once important, no longer are, and new things become central in their lives. If you want to have a real and complete character, you must first have an understanding of what drives them and keeps them from depression and total aimlessness (which can be interesting as well, simply decide that your character has no motivations at all). Your Nature and Demeanor can be of great assistance in determining your motivations.

• **Sire:** Most characters will know nothing about Vampire society, for they will have been kept from it by their Sire. Most Sires consider themselves the Prince of their Progeny, ruling over them and not introducing them to other Kindred. What was your Sire like? Did she aid or hinder you? How long was your "apprenticeship?" Where did you live? Where did you go?

Shelzza commands him otherwise. She wishes to see more of the world.

She disappears at sunrise,
I wonder where she goes
Until the night comes fallin' down again
She shows up with her friends half-alive.

– Tom Petty, *Zombie Zoo*

Example

Lisa decides to create a ***Vampire*** *character. Mark, the Storyteller, hands her a copy of a character sheet and the Character Creation Outline sheet. Using the outline, Lisa begins the process that will turn an idea into a full-fledged character.*

First, she must come up with a character Concept. Lisa wants to play a male character, since her last character was female, so she uses that to limit her Concept choices. A recent TV show on undercover narcotics agents has intrigued her, so she makes her character a "narc agent." The name Malcolm springs into her mind at this point, so the creation suddenly has a name.

After looking through the list of Vampire Clans, Lisa decides on the Gangrel Clan—she's always been fascinated by wolves!

Finally, Lisa ponders for a moment on Malcolm's Nature and Demeanor. These two Traits will help her to nail down Malcolm's personality more easily. His Nature is Malcolm's deep-rooted self, the part of him which affects all his thoughts and actions. Lisa decides that he is a Loner and that is the reason he got into the narcotics part of police work — he liked working undercover, alone. To the world, Malcolm pretends to be a Fanatic — ie. his Demeanor. He figures that most people shy away from Fanatics and leave them alone, thus facilitating his Nature. His vendetta against the drug kingpins of Chicago has given him quite a reputation in the police force and is the focus of his fanaticism. Lisa will decide in the Prelude what exactly caused Malcolm to become so fanatical over the drug issue. At this point, Lisa also adds a quirk to Malcolm, deciding that he only feeds off of drug pushers, addicts or other drug-related people.

Now Lisa must choose Malcolm's Attributes. She prioritizes his categories in the following way:

Mental is Malcolm's primary category, since his job requires a keen Wit and Perception in order to survive in the "jungle."

Physical is Malcolm's secondary category, since being a cop requires a certain degree of physical fitness.

Social is Malcolm's tertiary category. This is because he is a loner and also because his undercover work makes him seem like a "low-life."

Dividing up Malcolm's 7 Mental points, Lisa ends up giving him a 3 Perception (2 points + the 1 point that is free

in each Attribute), a 3 Intelligence, and a 4 Wits (all of which are vital for his job as an undercover cop).

Malcolm's 5 Physical points are spent giving him a high Dexterity of 4, while splitting the two remaining points up between Strength and Stamina, leaving him with scores of 2 in each.

Finally, of the 3 Social points, 2 are spent on Manipulation giving him a 3 (handy in the streets) and the remaining point is spent on Charisma, giving him a 2. His Appearance remains at the base 1 (he's not very handsome).

Next, Lisa has to prioritize and pick Malcolm's Abilities. She decides that Malcolm relies more on his innate Talents to survive on the street (this becomes his primary Ability category). Skills are also important to police officers, so this becomes his secondary category, with Knowledge becoming the tertiary by default (school-taught subjects don't amount to much in the face of a revolver).

Lisa has 13 points to spend in Talents. She gives Malcolm 3 points each in Streetwise and Brawl (important Talents for survival in the streets); 2 each in Alertness (a cop's gotta watch his back), Subterfuge (a must for undercover work), and Athletics (gotta be in good shape); and 1 in Dodge (avoiding those lethal blows).

For the 9 points Lisa needs to spend in Skills, she gives Malcolm a 3 in Firearms (a must for a cop), 2 each in Drive and Stealth (again, a must for his work), and finally 1 point each in Melee and Survival (she may need to spend some of her freebie points here).

Finally, Lisa puts 3 of her 5 Knowledge points in Investigation (Malcolm's main line of work) and the remaining 2 points are put into Law (he knows just enough about the law to get by as a cop) and Linguistics (he speaks Spanish, the language of the narcotics world).

Now comes the Vampire part. Lisa has to figure out Malcolm's Advantages, starting with the Disciplines — those powers which make a Vampire different from a human. Since she only has 3 points to spend on Disciplines and she must choose from Animalism, Fortitude or Protean because of Malcolm's Gangrel Lineage, Lisa puts all 3 points into Protean (she wants to get that ability to change into a wolf, but that will be somewhere down the line)

Lisa decides that most of Malcolm's Background points are going to be spent on things tied with his past (ie. before he became a Vampire). Therefore, she spends 2 points each for Influence and Contacts (both of these being with the police department and the drug underworld). The remaining point is spent giving Malcolm some Resources to play with.

To finish up the Advantages, Lisa must assign points to Malcolm's Virtues. She has 7 points to place (there is already a score of 1 in each Virtue). Malcolm has a lot of Courage and Self-Control, thus Lisa expends 3 points in each, bringing them to 4. The remaining point is spent on Conscience bringing it to

The fresh air of the Mediterranean delights her powerful senses.

2 (Malcolm has a cynical view of human nature after spending the good portion of the last 10 years in the cesspool of human existence — the world of drugs).

Now Lisa has to put the finishing touches on her character. First she must calculate Malcolm's starting Willpower, Humanity and Blood Pool. Malcolm's Willpower is the same as his Courage rating, ie. 4. She marks off that many dots on his character sheet. His Humanity is the sum of his Conscience and Self-Control, ie. 4+2 or 6, which she marks on her sheet. And Malcolm's starting Blood Pool is determined by a die roll, which comes up 6 for Lisa, so she marks off 6 boxes on the character sheet.

Finally, Lisa gets to spend 15 Freebie points on Malcolm. She really wants Malcolm to be lightning quick, so she spends 7 of the points to raise his Celerity to 1 (a Discipline that Malcolm couldn't get from his Clan). Lisa also wants Malcolm's Melee to be a little higher, so she spends 2 points to raise it to 2. She also thinks it would be nice to have Malcolm be cool under fire, so she spends 2 more points raising his Self-Control to 5 and adding a point of Humanity in the process. She decides to put the remaining 4 points into Willpower, since Malcolm is very strong-willed.

This marks the official end of the character generation process, but Lisa decides that she wants to fill in some of the little details to bring Malcolm to life. These details may change during the Prelude, but they provide both her and the Storyteller with little nuggets to expand upon when they play the Prelude.

Malcolm has two main Contacts—Sgt. Grabowski in homicide and "Softshoe," his informant on the street. Lisa doesn't want to specialize too much yet, but she decides that Malcolm's Investigate Knowledge will be specialized in Narcotics, and she writes this in the spot provided on the sheet. For a Haven, Malcolm still rents the apartment he had as a human, using the money stolen from the drug dealers he kills to finance the pad. Malcolm's feeding ground is all the derelicts and rejects who sink themselves into the drug subculture — and there is a never-ending supply of them.

The only equipment of note for Malcolm is his service revolver and badge, which he still carries, even though he has been relieved of his duty due to a poor attendance record (those daytime meetings can be lethal). He also has an old, rusted-out cop car which he bought at a police auction. In describing Malcolm to Mark, Lisa tells him to think of a very unsavory member of a motorcycle gang — unkept, unshaven, and dirty.

Lisa has already established the quirk that Malcolm will only feed on drug people. At this time, Lisa also decides that Malcolm has developed a drug problem of his own from drinking the blood of drug users. Malcolm's main motivation is to continue his life as if nothing had happened. He's content to use his new found powers to bring the drug community to justice, but he doesn't want to believe that his life as a human is at an end. Thus, he still hangs on to his badge, gun and car as last vestiges of his former life and occupation. At this point, Lisa doesn't have a clear idea about Malcolm's Sire, except that he was one vagabond too many in Malcolm's fanatical desire to rid Chicago of drugs.

Voila! A completed character. Next Mark will take Lisa and Malcolm through a Prelude to help further delineate some of the ideas Lisa came up with in generating her character.

This is progress? Where is the glory of Babylon?

Now darkness has a hunger that's insatiable
And lightness has a call that's hard to hear.
I wrap my fear around me like a blanket.
I sailed my ship of safety till I sank it.
I'm crawling on your shore.

– Indigo Girls, *Closer To Fine*

Looking Ahead

In the process of creating a character, you have hopefully become ready to roleplay that character as well. An important part of the process of character creation is an attachment that develops between you and your character, enabling you to play the role creatively and with purpose. Nurture your empathy for your character — if she is at all different from you, it might not come naturally.

The process of character creation does not end with the start of the first story, for a character never stops growing, changing, developing and maturing. As the Chronicle progresses, create new personality traits and historical details. Use your experience wisely to develop your abilities. Seek to build your character's Willpower and maintain her Humanity, and always, always be adding more and more flesh to these bare bones. The most real elements of the character can only be captured in your roleplaying and can never be realized upon the character sheet.

Most importantly, you should think of ways in which the personality of your characters might change because of the things that occur in their lives and then guide them in that direction. Let them determine their own fates. Never "force" them to fall into your earlier conceptions of who and what they should be. An angry Deviant who learns to control his rage, or a aimless Loner who gains a sense of hope can be a beautiful thing, especially if the Storyteller catches on to what you are doing and builds a sub-plot around it. Even characters who only get "worse" can develop deeper and more relevant personas.

If your character ever bores you, it's probably because you haven't developed and changed him enough over time. Ideally, the character simply grows more real as you play in the Chronicle, developing as a character and as a person. The way they change reveals as much about the character as the way they are described. A character in a short story is rarely as real and complete as one in a novel — there simply isn't enough time for proper development. Make your characters as real, complete, vital and interesting as you possibly can throughout the duration of the Chronicle, not just at the start.

The character is the true basis of a story. The Storyteller has no direct control over the character. So do your part for the story by roleplaying your character with gusto, patience, subtlety, grace and wisdom.

Novelists often speak of characters in their books coming to life, refusing to be manipulated or directed by the writer. This type of character stands out from the page and says "Leave me alone. I'm real," and then does as he will, regardless of the author's original intent. We can learn much from this experience — it speaks of what makes a good character.

The Chronicle

I've loved, turned to hate
Trapped far beyond my fate.
I give, you take
This life that I for sake.
Been cheated of my youth
You turned this lie to truth.

— Metallica, *Harvest of Sorrow*

The Storyguide has more to do than the players in preparation for the start of a **Vampire** Chronicle. While the players create their characters, you can't sit around idly. You should have already begun the creation of the Chronicle. Before the Chronicle can begin, you must have an idea of what it will be like — its setting, antagonists and central issues. You must create a setting which will excite the players, antagonists that will provoke them, and issues that will involve them. Creating the Chronicle is like creating the most important character of

She feels only revulsion for this infested city. The blood here does not call to her.

the game. The more time you spend on it, the better it will be and the more prepared you will be when the Chronicle actually begins.

Many Chronicle concepts restrict which Backgrounds the players may choose, as well as how high a rating the players can take in general. Before the players get to Step 5 in the character creation process, you must have a firm idea of what restrictions you will place, and that means you have to do some planning.

You must also be sure that the players will work together during the Chronicle, and that their conflicts won't become its focus (unless that's what you are looking for). All too often, players will create their characters in isolation from one another and worry about meshing into a group once the game starts. Often what results is a group of anarchists, with no system for working together or getting anything done. A lot of time is wasted with arguing and endless, meandering debates on what to do next.

Direct the players to conceive of how their characters will relate with one another and what roles each will play in the group. Make sure that one of the players with leadership skills plays a character who will be a leader. If you have any players who tend to be disruptive, direct them toward a character who can comfortably fit within the group, while still maintaining their independence. If your players are incorrigible anarchists, you can select a Chronicle concept that forces them to make characters who are allies, have significant responsibilities, or allows them to be Anarchs rebelling against the Elders of the city.

Shelzza decides to sleep again. Perhaps the world will be more to her liking when she awakes.

Prelude

I remember, before, my mother dragged me out to the shops with her. She often did. I'd been a good boy, for a change, and she'd taken me to the sweet shop for a couple of candied sticks, or some such. My reward, as it were. We were only there a moment when my mother spied a friend of her's in the shop too. She went to talk, as she often did, and left me standing there. It took me a moment, but I realized that I was alone. Me and the metal scoops of candy piled high. A lifetime of dreams, and no one to see me. No one to stop me.

When my mother returned, she found me standing there, shaking, my face red and hands clenched till they nearly bled. Oh how I'd wanted to just grab and take and stuff my pockets until they overflowed and then fill myself up, stuffing the sweets inside me until I couldn't fit anymore. Only then would I stop.

But I was afraid. Frightened of being discovered, terrified of never being allowed into the sweet shop again, of not being able to stuff enough inside me to be happy forever. I was afraid.

I am not afraid anymore.

—Anonymous

It is often a good idea to spend an entire game session creating characters. This ensures that the players don't feel rushed and that they take the time to make a complete, flesh-and-blood character, not some paper-thin stooge. Once you are done with the practical details of the character creation, you can spend the rest of the game session conducting the Prelude. While you spend time with each player separately, the rest of them can socialize and start to get excited about what lies ahead. Remember it's that anticipation that can make your story really shine.

The Prelude provides a frame of reference for everything else that happens in the Chronicle. Without it, a character will not make as much sense or be as complete. It's a way of doing some quick and dirty roleplaying to get a character ready for play, much like the page of character description a novelist gives major characters when they enter the story. It is essential for the story, but it doesn't need to go on for 100 pages.

The Prelude is a way to create character biographies before the Chronicle actually begins, allowing the characters to live out their lives prior to the moment when the first story starts. It is quite similar to normal play, except that many years are compressed into in a series of rapid-fire decisions.

Each player goes through the Prelude alone. It is one-on-one unless two or more characters were friends and spent a lot of time together before the *Embrace*. You will need to direct the player much more than you usually will. Let the players make lots of rolls, so that they feel that they are doing something and have lots of decisions for them to make as well — but rush everything and don't give them much time to think. The Prelude needs to be very fast, unless you are willing and able to spend more time (which can make for very in-depth characters). You almost never engage in combat during the Prelude. Rather, the Storyteller simply describes the results of any fight gotten into and how the character got away (you can't have the character die before the game even begins!)

During the time you set aside for the Prelude, be sure to let the players have a chance to interact with both the setting and the rules. You need to give them a chance to explore both. If during the Prelude the player wants to change a few Traits, you should let them, as long as it is not an attempt to create a super-character.

A vital part of a character's background is the creation of a personal history, one of the things the Prelude does best. It helps you create a sense of where your character grew up and what her life was like. It is our past that defines us best, for it is the best indication of what we might become. The personal history you create in the Prelude will be relevant throughout the Chronicle, and you may well refer to it frequently. Indeed, the Storyteller may also do so as a storytelling technique.

Stages of the Prelude

The Prelude generally progresses in a cycle of turns, composed of three stages: the Storyteller describes the situation and gives the player options, the player makes decisions, and the two of them work out some sort of resolution. These stages are discussed below.

• **Description:** The Storyteller describes a general situation and presents the player with a variety of options on how to proceed. After the resolution of the previous turn, a new situation may present itself, or the Storyteller may decide to advance in time and describe a whole new situation. Options may be suggested by character Traits, comments made by the player, or previous things that have happened to the character.

• **Decision:** The player makes some sort of decision, choosing between the options presented and informing the Storyteller what he believes the character would do. The player must consider the ambitions, motivations and weaknesses of the character.

• **Resolution:** Both the player and the Storyteller work together to decide how the situation is resolved. This is often done with dice rolls. For example, when a player decides to run away from home, the Storyteller could ask the player to roll Manipulation + Streetwise to see how well they survive on the streets the first few days. An extremely good or bad roll could lead to an elaborate description of what occurred.

The Course of the Prelude

Here is one way you could progress through a character's life, but remember you can run the Prelude any way that you feel creates a complete and intriguing character. During the course of the Prelude, you will want to explain the full background of the character, including how they gained their Resources and the identity of their Contacts. The player should have a firm idea of the details of their Background Traits.

His work at the Sistine Chapel completed, the artist puts the Babylonian palace on canvas, guided by Shelzza's vivid memory.

Age: Generally you start by asking the player how old they want their character to be at the start of the game. If the current game year (the year when you intend to begin the Chronicle) is 1993, and the character is about 37 years old (19 years as a human, 18 years as a Vampire), then you could start the Prelude out in 1965, when the character was only 9 years old. Since one of the objects of the Prelude is to give the players as much freedom as possible when determining the course of their character's life, starting so young is not completely out of line. Sometimes it is easier to assign dates and such *after* the Prelude is over.

Childhood: The two of you need to decide how the character spent her early life — the time when a person's basic motivations and attitudes are forged. But don't spend too much time on it, for childhood is only one element of a person's life. Of course, if the character was Embraced as a child, you will want to spend much more time on childhood.

Ask a few questions in this part of the Prelude, and then undertake to answer them. Where did you go to school? Who were your parents? Did you travel very much? What was high school like? Did you go to college? Did you run away from home? What sports did you play? As you can see, the options are endless, but as everyone has a pretty good idea of what being a youth is like, you shouldn't have much trouble.

You might want to play through a short scene where the character finally fights back at a bully or attempts to run away. Try to give each player a sense of their character's childhood, and provide something special to remember it by. Concentrate especially on things that will affect their future life, perhaps you can even bury some story leads as you go through their childhood.

You could include subtle clues about how the character was already being watched over by her Sire, even in childhood. Sometimes a Vampire is especially struck by a child and spends years watching them grow up, Embracing them only when they are full grown. It is not as uncommon as you might think.

Paris thrills her. The sick still wander the streets, but she moves in different circles.

Setting: Once the character is full grown, you've got to establish the setting just as you would do at the start of the scene. Briefly describe to the player what their adult life was like, perhaps letting them come up with a lot of the basic details. Then you need to give them the chance to roleplay themselves as a human.

Roleplay a typical scene from their life to give them a sense of how they lived as a mortal. You can get them into their Vampire role by showing them the bland mundanity of their mortal existence. It should be something so mundane and common that it will radically juxtapose with the horror and terror of becoming a Vampire (which occurs next). Remember, it is the mundane that gives scope to the magnificent.

It can work something like this: "You're coming home from work on a Friday and the traffic is especially foul. You had a bad day at the agency, and find it hard to hold back your temper. You climb up the three flight stairs to your apartment, but your key won't work. What do you do?" As you describe things, let the player interrupt them with their own ideas and details of what is going. You are telling a story together as a team, so treat them more like partners and less like players. You should also include details that provoke the players into feeling the emotions of their characters; "Your father is in a coma in the hospital." But once the character becomes a Vampire, he can't freely visit anymore. The father may awaken or die, but the character may never see him again. The player needs to feel a sense of loss as profoundly as possible for the true horror of the game to come across.

Stalked: Describe that the player feels like they are being watched and build up the tension and suspense. They know what's coming, especially if they've read the title of the game, but sometimes that can make the tension all the more palpable. Slowly, the Vampire, their future Sire, stalks them. A character may notice a person always watching her, but when she turns around, the person is gone. She tries to lose her stalker, but somehow she never can. She may begin to believe that this individual has supernatural powers.

The Attack: You should roleplay the actually transformation in detail, allowing the player to actually feel the trauma of being changed over. If the player is attacked by the Vampire, then make it horrific and let the player make rolls to push the Vampire away. However, such attempts are all ineffective. Depending on the type of Chronicle you want to run, you can add in details that make the personal horror overwhelming. The Sire might throw the character's spouse into the cell with her, as the new Vampire begins to grow hungry. Try to lure the character into doing that first horrible act, but also encourage temperance. You might want to roleplay this part out in detail, making the feeding rolls as described in the Drama Chapter.

Neonate: What was it like for the character to be with his Sire? How did it affect them? How long did the Sire stay with the Neonate? These are some of the questions you must answer in this part of the Prelude. The Sire is the most important person in a Vampire's first few years. How the character was treated by their Sire will make a big difference in the character's personality. In the future, it will have a lot to do with how they interact with other Kindred. Most Sires keep their Progeny with them for many years, training and tutoring them, and keeping them as companions. Many such Fledglings are told nothing of the greater world of Vampires, and are even prevented from interacting with it. Sires do this because they are intensely jealous and wish to forge the personality of their "Childe" without interference.

There are many reasons why a Vampire will create Progeny. You must determine why the Sire of the character created him. Maybe they will use the Progeny to regain their Humanity. Maybe they simply want company. Or perhaps they use their Progeny as Vessels. Most Sires are cruel and ruthless, and though a few attempt to be as kind as they can, there can never truly be a good Sire. Decide how sick the Sire is and then play it out as vividly as you can.

The Release: Eventually, the character is released to the world and given her freedom. The Sire relinquishes all hold, and in so doing, no longer has responsibility for the

The culture is young, but the energy of the people in the New World is seductive.

Neonate. This moment is marked by the age old tradition of presenting the Neonate to the Prince. Until this point, the Neonate had not even been a subject of the Prince. In fact, they were not even responsible for their own actions. In being presented, a Vampire gains adulthood in the Kindred society.

The Prince may accept the character reluctantly, angrily, with good grace, or (on rare occasions) with great kindness. Normally this depends on the Sire's relationship with the Prince and the way in which the character was created. Most important is whether the Sire asked for permission before or after the Embrace itself. In this modern age, a surprising number of Vampires do not bother to gain permission from the Prince first, but insist upon it later (most likely because they probably wouldn't be given permission before).

Sometimes a Sire will take their Progeny far from their own Haven to "set them free." At other times, they will present the character to their own Prince. Even if the Sire normally ignores the Prince, she will do this one thing when their Fledgling leaves, lest punishment for future crimes of the Fledgling be brought to bear on the Sire.

The character might be released because he has become too dangerous to keep. In some cases, a Neonate only learns for sure that there are others of their kind after they have been released.

The Traditions: Prior to the release, make sure the Sire tells the Neonate of the Five Great Traditions handed down from Caine. It starts out with them being told their Clan and Generation. "You are of the Eleventh Generation from Caine, of the Clan Tremere, and so these words from him are not so distant from you, for they were spoken by him to his Fledgling." Then Fledglings are simply told of the Traditions of their own kind, and perhaps something of what the society of Vampires is like. These Traditions are described in the Setting Chapter on page 173.

Wrapping It Up: Use whatever means necessary to get the Vampires together. The first moment when they all meet each other could have been years ago, or it could be only minutes before the game actually begins. In fact, the characters might actually meet only after the game begins. Generally, however, it is best to solidify a relationship between them before the action gets hot and heavy.

Each character needs to meet the others, and often it is best if it could be some sort of special moment. It can be done one at a time, so that each character has a unique relationship with one or two other characters, or you can have everyone meet all at once and get it done with. It is not suggested that you wait until the game begins before you have the characters meet. You need to set the scene and stage the moment, but then you've got to let they players go at it by themselves.

Before the game starts, the characters have to trust each other, otherwise your story will probably self-destruct. If you are the glue holding the group together, then their friendship won't last very long. Let them forge their own ties and give them the responsibility for maintaining them.

You may want to continue the Prelude for a while and bring all the characters up to date. Allow them a few years to be acquaintances or even friends. How long have they been together in the city that is the setting for the Chronicle?. The characters are now all ready to go. All you need to do is begin the first story.

It's an infection
It's a disease
But no reflection
It's gonna make your blood freeze
Oh you know how I feel when you set me free
Like a nightmare.
— Motorhead, *Like A Nightmare*

In the South, she feels most at home.

Example

Lisa and Mark get together just before the first Vampire game session in order to play Malcolm's Prelude. Because there are only 3 players, they can spend a little more time on it than normal. Lisa shows Mark her character sheet and explains her rationales for her choices, thus giving Mark a feeling for Malcolm's character and giving him a chance to spot any loose ends.

Mark (playing the Storyteller): "OK, I think we better delve a little bit into Malcolm's childhood to see what's made him so vengeful against the drug community."

Lisa (playing Malcolm): "Well, I figure that Malcolm's parents were both recreational users of drugs, but that his father became addicted and this disrupted the family life.

Mark: Yeah, but I think that Malcolm's father actually OD'ed when Malcolm was, say, 9 years old, leaving Malcolm's mother to raise a rambunctious young boy through adolescence. The stress of having to work to support herself and her son, the problems with raising a son without a father, and her own addiction to drugs caused Malcolm's mother to become a shell of what she used to be. To this day, she lives in a government run care facility and has lost most of her will.

Lisa (playing off of this): Without a father and coming from a disruptive home, Malcolm was alone most of the time. He learned not to give his love or friendship to anyone, since this had been betrayed by his parents in the past.

Mark and Lisa at this point roleplay through a scene where Malcolm has to get his mother to the hospital after an accidental overdose. They go through the scene in detail, allowing Lisa to understand her character more deeply after vicariously experiencing one of the worst moments in Malcolm's life. Lisa decides that after that moment, Malcolm does not allow himself to feel anymore—he becomes a cold fish, dead to all emotion. They discuss what happened briefly and then press ahead.

Mark: OK, so what did Malcolm do with all that free time as a youth, especially if he was a loner and didn't have any friends.

Lisa: He roamed around the streets of the city, watching, listening, becoming attuned to the heartbeat of the city. It fascinated him, the night life and the people it attracts especially. Though he was drawn to the evil in the city, he was also disgusted by it. He also became an avid reader of mystery and spy novels.

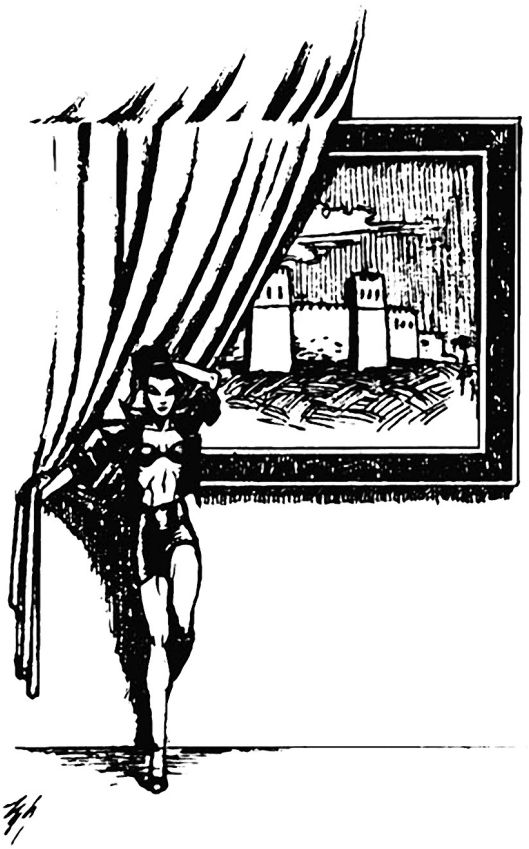
Mark: Hmm, that could be interesting later on. That pretty much sets up Malcolm's childhood. So, Malcolm grew up in a pretty bad home. He developed an interest in fighting crime,

The waterfront of prohibition Chicago provides her with excitement.

especially combating the drug trade. After high school, Malcolm enrolled in the Police Academy in Chicago and graduated with honors. Nobody particularly liked Malcolm, but he was a good cop. He started off on a regular beat, but when he made a number of drug related busts, the department saw his potential and put him on the narc squad. You wanted to be a narc, right? Alright, that's where he's been for the last ten years. Malcolm's grown accustomed to the streets — its the home he's never known.

Lisa: Yeah, and Malcolm's apartment, if you can call it that, is located in the middle of one of the worst parts of Chicago. It's more of a flophouse than anything else, though it's a place he can call home.

Mark: OK, Malcolm, you get up early one day. Your ears on the street, Softshoe (one of Malcolm's Contacts), has told you about a deal that will be going down. Finally, your big chance to break a major link in the Caranetti Cartel. The meeting is set for the P.S. Finnelley Warehouse on Pier 12 at 4:30 am. So hot shot, wat'cha gonna do?



Chicago has a charm that is not lost in the following half-century. Shelzza settles in a new Haven.

Lisa: Another day without a shower! Well, I wanna look my grungiest, to give the appearance any other bum on the waterfront. I'll pack my usual piece in my hipholster, along with a knife in my boot and one taped to the small of my back. I'll go down to the waterfront early and plant myself in an appropriate looking spot. Then I'll play the part of a drunk, watch and wait.

Mark: OK, you arrive on the waterfront at 10 til 4 and you find a good looking dumpster to stage your drunkard act. At 4:23, you see a car with Sergei Caranetti in it pull up outside the warehouse. His boys check the place out and then he goes inside. A couple of minutes later, another limo pulls up and another group of men go inside the warehouse.

Lisa: Crap. I was hoping that they would transact their business outside. OK, I'll move in closer and see if there is a window or backdoor that I can go through to get a good look inside.

Mark: You're moving toward the warehouse silently, so make a Stealth + Dexterity roll (Mark waits for the roll). You see an open window about ten feet up a wall, down a deserted alley. You size up the wall, trying to figure out how you are going to scale up to the window. Suddenly, you hear a thud behind you. Not ten feet away is the body of one of Caranetti's men, his throat torn open, his blood wending crimson rivers toward your feet. You have the distinct impression now that somebody is watching you.

Lisa: I crouch into a defensive position and scan the whole area around me.

Mark: Fine (rolling some dice), you don't see anybody, but the feeling of being watched is still there.

Lisa: This is too weird. I'm going to get out while the getting's good. Malcolm is really freaking out, but he doesn't show it of course.

Mark: Of course. You make your way back to your pad. For the next few weeks, you have the feeling of being watched, but you never can figure out who or what is doing the watching. Finally, after a hard day of work one day, you come back to your pad. While you are removing your weapons, you feel a touch on your shoulder. Whirling around, you come face to face with a ragged looking bum. You recognize him as the low life you threw out of one of those low rent crackhouses you cleared out about two months ago. You remember him because, of all the scum inhabiting the crackhouse, he was the only one who went without making a fuss, threatening to sue the city, and all that stuff. He had a certain dignity about him — at least for a bum. But as you take this all in, he grabs you by the shoulders.

Lisa: Well, I try to break his grasp and roll to the right, toward the dresser where my gun is.

Mark: The bum's grip is like iron and you are suddenly frozen by an almost bestial look in his eyes. Then, like a dream, he starts to rip your throat open with his teeth. Your hands grip the hair on the back of his neck in an anguished ecstasy. (Mark goes into more detail, describing the agony

and horror of death). You awake later, with a thirst burning in your throat. A quick survey of your $4 alarm clock tells you that it is 9 pm — you must have been out all day! There is blood caked on your clothes and hair.

Lisa: Hang on now. I'm feeling alright?

Mark: You seem fine except for this burning thirst in your throat.

Lisa: Must be where he ripped at my throat. I'm going to get a Coke from the frig and start my shower — I guess it's time for that weekly ritual.

Mark: The Coke stays in your stomach for about 5 seconds before it comes right back up. If anything, your thirst has become more intense. Then you notice yourself in the mirror — you are horrified!

The Prelude continues as Mark and Lisa roleplay out the rest of Malcolm's journey into the world of the Vampire. Malcolm finds out that his thirst is not for water or any other liquid, but rather for that water of life which Vampires call Vitæ. Luckily for Malcolm, he is pragmatic and has no family to speak of, so he is able to adapt to this new need without too much trauma. He quickly transforms an urge that is horrible into one that is useful, and one by one, important drug figures in Chicago disappear, never to be heard from again.

However, the change to nocturnal habits doesn't put him in good standing down at the precinct, and Mark informs Lisa that Malcolm loses his job. His old partner stops by one day and Malcolm has to lie low. By this time, however, Malcolm doesn't care, since he has become the dispenser of justice and his brand of justice is swift, sure and oh so satisfying. The thrill of vigilante justice is consuming.

Malcolm never sees hide nor hair of his Sire again, though the feeling of being watched comes back at times. Malcolm sometimes catches glimpses of fleeting shadows, but more often than not, he is left staring into thin air.

Malcolm knows what he has become. He had read about Vampires in his fiction novels when he was a young boy. But to him, that's all they are — stories. Now he knows the horrible truth, and he also knows that he isn't alone. He is approached by some of the other Kindred of the city. One night, he is cornered by a gang of Vampires, beaten senseless, and when he is immobilized, brought in front of several older men, one whom calls himself the Prince and another who is Malcolm's Sire. They inform him of his place in their society, tell him what he can and can't do, and basically invoke a feudal order upon a lone wolf. His Sire does not speak to him directly at all. Though he chafes at their words, Malcolm is in no position to do anything about it at the time, so he lets them do what they want, tells them what they want to hear, and he even drinks the Prince's blood in some ritual of allegiance. Anything to satisfy them and get the hell out of there.

After the Prince lets Malcolm go, he is approached by another of the Kindred and told of a meeting in an old brewery, where those who are dissatisfied with the yoke of the Prince will meet and plot the downfall of their regime. This is one meeting Malcolm isn't going to miss!

At this point, Mark and Lisa end Malcolm's Prelude. They will pick up Malcolm's story with the first game session, when Mark will introduce Malcolm to the other characters.

Let me go I can't breathe
Yes the desperate have no shame
My insatiable need
My uncontrollable greed
The pleasure is the pain.

— Jane Child, *Hey Mr. Jones*

Book Two: The Hunger

The sweet aroma, yes. The succulent savor. Its weight and marrow. I imagine the cooling flames of the elixir cascading down my throat, nourishing me. But I am parched and barren. A husk. My need envelops every painful step I take.

Soon. I will need blood soon.

The soft click of heels on cement brings me alert. Like a shadow I move into the darkness of the alley. With a growing cadence that is maddening, the Vessel draws near.

There...ahhh. A whiff of cheap perfume. The aroma of nervous tension. The fragrance of living blood. I can almost taste the sweet nectar.

The pale light of a streetlamp brings my prey into focus. Her long hair bounces lightly off her shoulder. A face, rosy with exertion. A beauty only I can appreciate. Her anxious eyes scan the doorways, doubtless envisioning rapists and muggers.

She passes me by with a quick glance into the alley. I break away from the shadows. An arm's-length away, I can hear her heart pumping.

I have become death, the destroyer of souls.

Gliding toward her, the smell of her life-plasm waifs over me, arousing me. She is only inches from my caressing touch. My mind screams with lust.

NO!

I pull back, my arm shaking. I cannot do it. A low moan escapes my lips. She whirls upon the darkness, eyes wide with terror. But she is blind to my presence, and with a low sigh turns away. I taste my own blood as it seeps between my clenched teeth, and watch her fade into the night.

I am alone

"I am not a man,
I am life-in-death, a monster to thee,
I swim upon the night currents, watching,
waiting for when your neck shall be raised unto me."

Methusalah (ma-thōō' - za -la)

Chapter Four: Traits

The good want power, but to weep barren tears.
The powerful goodness want: worse need for them.
The wise want love; and those who love want wisdom.

— P. B. Shelly, *Prometheus Unbound*

In **Vampire**, Traits are the basis of a character; they describe, conjure and pin down who and what a character really is. They allow you to describe how your character is strong and how your character is weak, allow the character to be translated into game reality by using dice, and most importantly, they help you focus and understand your character.

The Traits describe only the general shape of the character, providing a rough sketch. The essential elements of the character are created through the roleplaying and the imagination of the player. Traits in **Vampire** are left intentionally sketchy — at least the number crunching part — so that you won't concentrate on the character sheet too much. What had been only crudely established during the character creation becomes fleshed out in play. So don't look at your Traits thinking you have a complete character. It is your roleplaying that will create your character, not these numbers and Traits.

Specialties

For each Attribute and Ability over a three rating, a player can select a Specialty. Though there is a general description of the Ability, sometimes there are also special things that a character is capable of performing at additional proficiency. Though you may be able to drive very well, you may be especially good at off-road maneuvers. Often Specialties are selected simply to better detail a character, but they can have some very real effects on the story as well.

A player does not pick a Specialty unless they have a rating of at least 3 in their Attribute or Ability. A player may declare a Specialty as a guide to roleplaying even if they do not have a rating of three, but it will have absolutely no effect on rule mechanics.

It is up to the Storyteller to decide how the Specialty will affect things. It might vary from action to action, depending on how specific or applicable the Specialty is. There are three different ways Specialties can affect actions, and the Storyteller may use any one of them or may make up a new method.

• The Specialty allows the player to reroll 10's on actions where the Specialty directly applies to what was attempted. They get to keep the success that the 10 originally indicated, but they get to try again for another success, rolling another dice for every 10. This method is best used with Attribute Specialties.

• If the Trait is over three, the full number of dice for the Trait can only be used if the Specialty specifically applies to the action. If it is not part of the Specialty, the player only gets to roll 3 dice for that Trait. This method is best used with Ability Specialties.

• The Specialty lowers the difficulty of the action by one. This method can be used with any Trait, but only when the Storyteller allows. This is the most straightforward but potentially destabilizing method. Use with Abilities, if the above method does not suit you.

Clans

The beauty of these sublime creatures overwhelms me. So naive and fragile, so sensual — their every word and gesture only increases my attraction to them. Listen my love, the night air sings of my love for you, and of my lust for what is carried within your veins....

— Claudius Giovanni, *Maelefactorium*

The following are the seven Clans, the Vampire Lineages, that make up the Camarilla. These are the Clans from which a player can choose for their character. While there are many other Clans among Vampires, these are the only ones who support the Camarilla and are thus part of the normal life and society of the Kindred.

BRUJAH

Nickname: Rabble

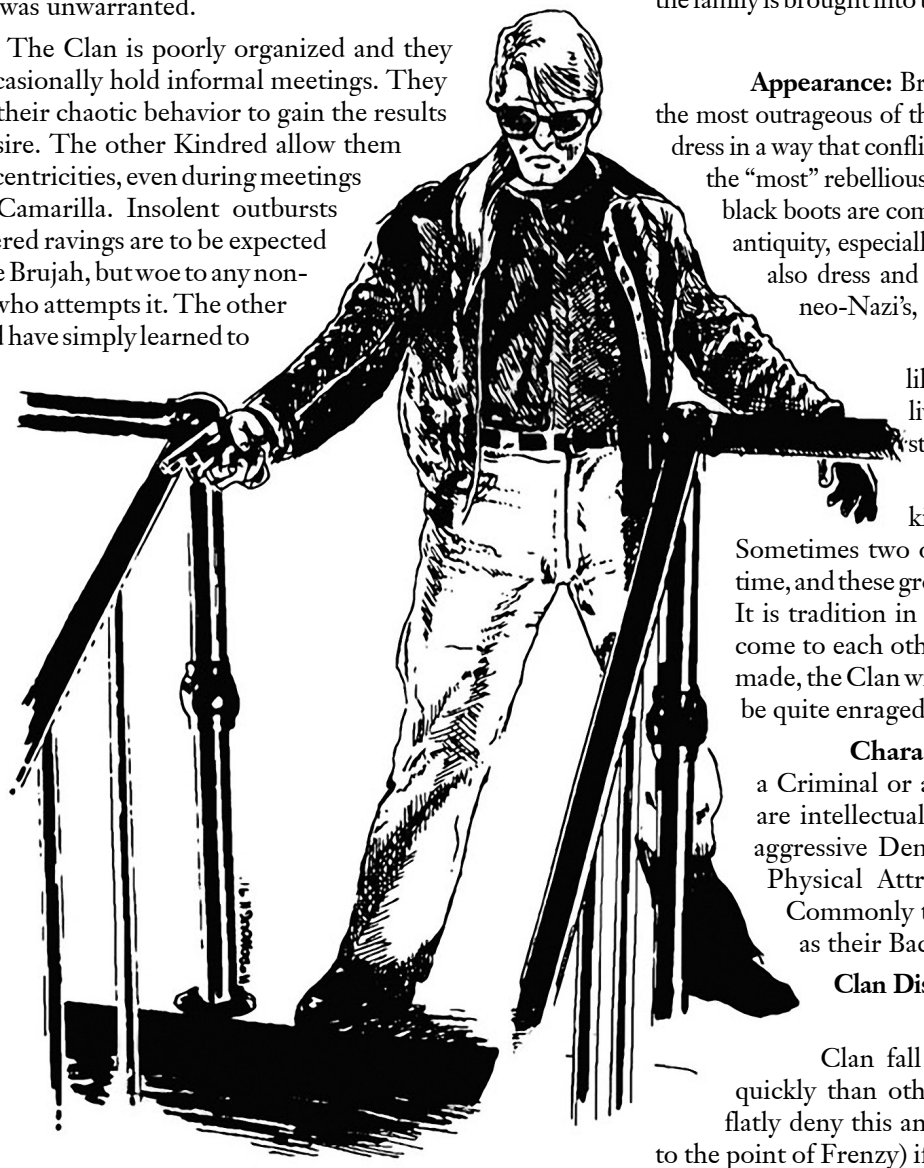
All the members of this Clan are rebels of one kind or another — they are punks, skinheads, bikers, communists or anarchists. They tend to be stubborn, ruthless, and highly aggressive. Sensitive to slights, they can also be highly vengeful. They are the most uncontrolled of all the Clans.

Brujah always choose rebels as their Progeny. Often a Sire will create more than one Progeny at a time, and these groups will form what are called "packs" (they don't always seek the permission of the Prince). Though the Brujah are incredibly fractious, it is traditional for its members to come to each other's aid in times of need, regardless of their disputes and antagonisms. If the call is made, the others will respond, but the gathered host will be enraged if they come to believe the call was unwarranted.

The Clan is poorly organized and they only occasionally hold informal meetings. They rely on their chaotic behavior to gain the results they desire. The other Kindred allow them their eccentricities, even during meetings of the Camarilla. Insolent outbursts and fevered ravings are to be expected from the Brujah, but woe to any non-Brujah who attempts it. The other Kindred have simply learned to provide the Brujah the leeway which would be given to no other Vampire.

These malcontents tend to be fanatical in their disparate beliefs — the only thing that unifies them is their desire to overthrow the social system, be it Vampiric or mortal, and replace it with one of their own making (or with nothing at all). They can be bullheaded crusaders of the worst sort, for they completely believe in what they are doing, and thus are blind to new shades of truth.

Those of this Clan have many different safe Havens, where they can go to hide out. Generally they move about quite a bit, never staying very long at any one place. A common tactic of theirs is to move in with a suburban family and Dominate them into submission. They "hang out" with the family for a few weeks, and then move on when they get bored. This is how many of the younger Brujah are recruited — the most rebellious teenager in the family is brought into the fold just before the Brujah move on.



Brujah

Appearance: Brujah tend to dress in whatever style is the most outrageous of the period, though sometimes they will dress in a way that conflicts with the rest of the Clan, so as to be the "most" rebellious. Leather coats, spiked hair, chains and black boots are common today, as are the various garbs of antiquity, especially those of the Renaissance. They may also dress and assume the attitudes of street-hoods, neo-Nazi's, or even "Dead-heads."

Haven: They live wherever they feel like, frequently kicking out whoever lived there before them. Seldom do they stay in one place for longer than a month.

Background: Rebels of some kind are always chosen as Neonates. Sometimes two or more will be created at the same time, and these groups will form what are called "packs." It is tradition in the Clan for its members to always come to each other's aid in time of need. If the call is made, the Clan will respond, but the gathered host will be quite enraged if they feel the call was unnecessary.

Character Creation: Brujah often have a Criminal or a Punk Concept, but many of them are intellectuals as well. They normally have very aggressive Demeanors and very extreme Natures. Physical Attributes are primary, as are Skills. Commonly they have Contacts, Allies and Herd as their Background Traits.

Clan Disciplines: Celerity, Potence, Presence

Weaknesses: The members of this Clan fall into Frenzies far more easily and quickly than other Vampires. However, the Brujah flatly deny this and become exceedingly hostile (even to the point of Frenzy) if the subject is raised. The Difficulty for Frenzy rolls is always two higher than the number listed.

Organization: This Clan is poorly organized and they rarely have formal meetings. However, its membership supports the Anarchs more than any other Clan. Indeed, they are at the movement's core.

Quote: "*All creatures of sentience deserve to be free—it is our born right. When we overthrow this decadent system that attempts to rule us, we can overthrow the system that rules the mortals as well. We shall be the saviors of the Earth.*"

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — They are rejected unjustly because of how they look. We are the only ones who respect them despite their bestiality.

• Tremere—Our archrivals, none are worse than these manipulators.

• Ventrue — These contemptible, conniving politicians are hypocrites of the highest degree.

• Gangrel — They know how to fight, that's for sure.

• Toreador — Effete bastards. They would make decent allies but for their addiction to the human vices.

• Malkavian — Some make fine compatriots, though they're all weirdos.

GANGREL

Nickname: Outlander

Members of this Lineage are wanderers, rarely holding to one location for any real period of time (by their reckoning). In this, they are very different from most Kindred who find a Haven and hold to it. There is no record of who the eldest in their line is and there are no established leaders of the Clan. Gangrel are unconcerned with such things. They are known for being withdrawn, quiet and solemn. They certainly keep their cards close to their chest.

This is a Lineage of survivors — Vampires who are capable of making it on their own. They do not despise civilization or the society of their Kindred — they simply do not require it. They are known for their lack of concern about crossing the lands of the Lupines (shape-changers), for it is said they have friends among them.

Gangrel always pick their Progeny-to-be very carefully, seeking those who are survivors and capable of existing on their own. Once they Embrace these mortals, passing the Curse to them, they abandon them, leaving them to make their way through the world. Though they may watch their Progeny from a distance, Sires rarely interfere. When they feel the Childe is ready, they present themselves and teach the Childe the true ways of the line.

The Gangrel are very capable transformers which may explain their ability to cross the wild areas unmolested. There are no reports of them being able to transform into anything other than wolves and bats, but there are old tales of a Gangrel Elder being able to achieve a mist form. Perhaps because of this Protean Discipline, they often have features distinctly reminiscent of some animal, especially if they have the Protean Discipline. Each time they Frenzy, the Gangrels gain another animal feature.

If the stories are to be believed, the Gypsies are the mortal descendants of the Antediluvian who stands at the head of the Gangrel line. They are under his protection, and any Kindred who harms or Embraces one of them will answer to their ancestor. Regardless of whether this is true or not, by general consensus no Kindred will harm a Gypsy or impede their actions. Members of the Gangrel Clan are expected, through long standing Clan tradition, to aid the Gypsies whenever necessary. It has been

Gangrel

known for them to be aided by the Gypsies as well. Certain groups of Gangrel have adopted much from the Gypsy culture, including their manner, aspects of their language, and in some instances their dress.

Appearance: The members of this Clan often have animal-like features, especially if they have the Protean Discipline. They are usually quite rustic in dress and mannerisms.

Haven: Wanderers by nature, the members of this Clan almost never make any one place their home. Though they may live within a single city, they will usually not create a Haven for themselves. They are often found in parks, zoos or semi-wooded areas in the city. Most of them are able to earth meld and do so each night to escape the sun.

Background: They always pick their Neonates very carefully, seeking those who are survivors and capable of living on their own. However, once they Embrace these mortals, passing the Curse to them, they abandon them, leaving the Neonate to make her own way through the world. Though Sires may watch from a distance, they almost never interfere. When the time is right, they present themselves to their Fledgling and teach them the ways of the Clan.

Character Creation: Gangrel often have a Drifter or a Working Joe Concept. Their Nature and Demeanor tend to be quite similar. Physical Attributes are primary, as are Talent Abilities. Normal Background Traits are Allies (the Gypsies) and Mentor (their Sire).

Clan Disciplines: Protean, Animality, Fortitude

Weaknesses: Gangrel become increasingly animal-like each time they Frenzy — the player must pick a new animal feature each and every time they fall into a Frenzy. They increasingly come to look like that which they truly are, the Beast. These features tend to have a negative effect on the character's Social rolls. With every three animal features gained, the player must lower one of his or her Social Traits by one.

Organization: The Gangrel do not really consider themselves a Clan. They never have Clan meetings and rarely attend Camarilla councils. However, they do tend to enjoy one another's company more than they do the other Kindred and can often be found together.

Quote: *"The city is not our home. It is simply the only place where we are allowed to exist for long. To be sure, it is the outlands where we belong. Our people have become ill and deranged because we have lived in this purgatory so long and have grown dependent on the tainted blood of the mortals."*

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — True Kindred, we share much with them.

• Tremere — Though they do not realize it, we are enemies. They follow the wrong path and will destroy us all.

• Ventrue — Every group must have leaders, every leader must serve the group. Our leaders are no worse or better than most.

• Toreador — We hold them in contempt because they have earned nothing better. They must learn to serve others.

• Brujah — Their virtue is pure, but their vision is cloudy.

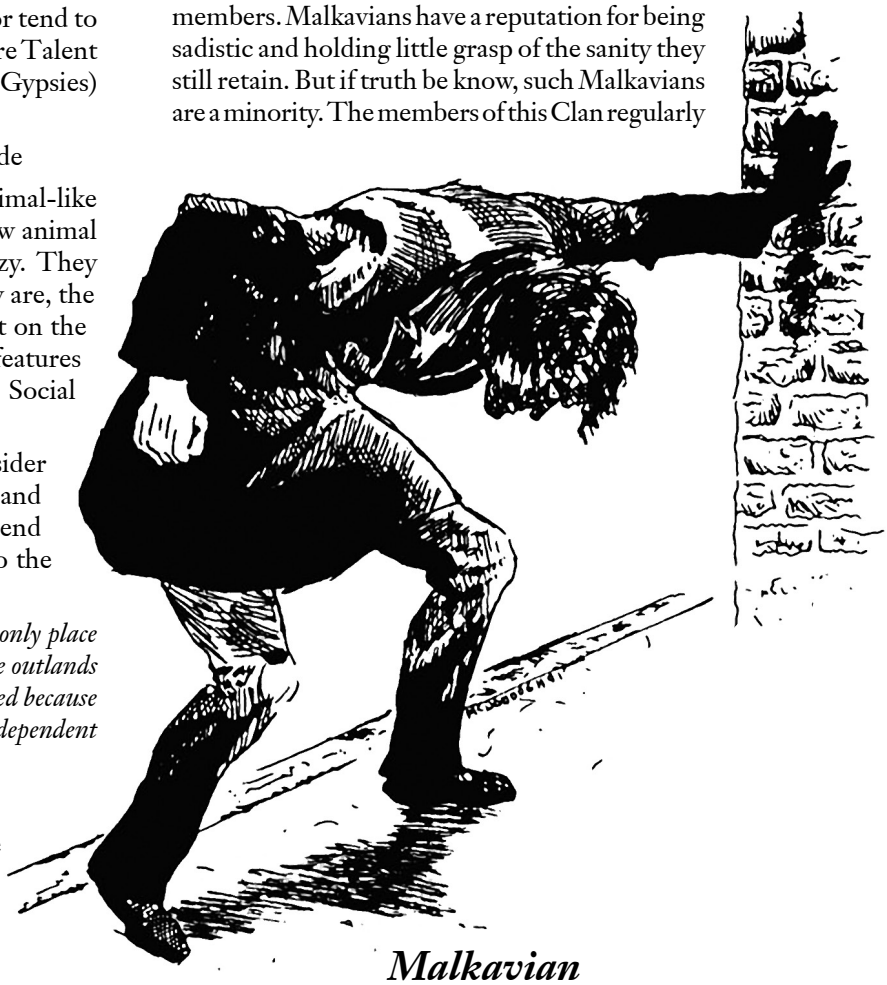
• Malkavian — They are reservoirs of immense power, but even they do not know how to tap it.

MALKAVIAN

Nickname: Kook

The members of this Clan are all insane. But from madness comes insight. And from insight comes power. The Malkavians are true creatures of chaos. However, the Malkavians are also known to be clowns and pranksters. As with all things connected with them, not everything makes sense.

This Clan is known for its destructive and nihilistic members. Malkavians have a reputation for being sadistic and holding little grasp of the sanity they still retain. But if truth be know, such Malkavians are a minority. The members of this Clan regularly



Malkavian

surprise the Kindred, for they do not seem insane. This is so common that many Kindred believe the Malkavians have an undeserved reputation. However, remember that sometimes the most normal seeming people have the least grasp on reality.

There is a long tradition among the Malkavians of playing practical jokes on both mortals and Vampires. The shape and form that these "pranks" take can vary wildly, and can range from harmless fun to the potentially terminal. The Malkavians, when they interact at all with one another, tend to award prestige to one another on the basis of these pranks. Many Malkavians have the solemn belief that the Jyhad is a joke created by the founder of their line.

The Malkavians are very choosey about who they Embrace. Typically, only those on the edges of sanity are chosen. The members of this Clan search long and hard for someone who has seen so much truth that they have descended into the pits of chaos, and thus have a unique perspective on reality. However, if the Progeny-to-be is sane, the Sire will make the Embrace and Becoming as difficult as possibly, seeking to drive the mortal mad in the process.

Appearance: The members of this Clan have different looks and live vastly differing life-styles.

Haven: Anywhere they feel comfortable. Many of them seek out hospitals and asylums to reside in. They may even be assumed to be inmates by the staff.

Background: The members of this Clan only select those who are close to death as Neonates, or those who are so insane that existence as a Vampire is of little consequence. They believe that all mortals should have a chance to live out their natural lives.

Character Creation: Malkavians can have any sort of Concept, the weirder the better. They may have a variety of different Demeanors and rarely are they very much like their Natures. Mental Attributes are primary, as are the Talents. They can have nearly any Background Trait.

Clan Disciplines: Auspex, Obfuscate, Dominate

Weaknesses: All members of this Clan have some sort of Derangement. In fact, characters begin the game with one. You can choose any Derangement (see page 125), but you will never be able to completely overcome it, no matter how much Willpower you use. The touch of madness is always upon you.

Organization: Many Malkavians probably do not understand that they are a Clan, and the rest are busy denying that they are Malkavians.

Quote: "*Madness you say! Do you fear me, are you afraid of what I might do, of what I might say? What a fascinating reaction. Don't you find it somewhat encumbering?*"

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — They are the most amusing of all the Clans and perhaps the most true, for they so obviously are what the others try so hard to avoid.

• Tremere — They perceive what we perceive, but hide from it. They still strive to avoid that which is inevitable. Nature is full of cycles.

• Ventrue — They are the most fun to play games with, for they take it all so very seriously.

• Gangrel — They are different from the rest, as we are, but they are even more lonely.

• Toreador — Such gleeful degenerates — it is not a life they live, but an everlasting death. But if they should ever understand that, their party would end.

• Brujah — They have a vision, but in their fanaticism they are as blind as all the rest.

NOSFERATU

Nickname: Sewer Rats

This Clan is the least human in appearance of all the Lineages. They look something like feral animals. Their smell and appearance is revolting — one could even say monstrous. They have long bulbous ears, a coarse-skinned skull covered with tufts of hair, and an elongated face covered with the most disgusting warts and lumps.

After a Nosferatu has been Embraced, he undergoes an exceptionally painful period of transformation. Over a period of weeks, they slowly shift from their mortal guise to their Nosferatu visage. In the beginning, the Childe may revel in their new found powers, but soon the pain and the changes will begin. It is likely that the psychological trauma is more painful than the physical symptoms.

Nosferatu only Embrace those mortals who are twisted in one way or another: emotionally, physically, spiritually or intellectually. They consider the Embrace to be too horrific to bestow on any worthwhile human being. With the change into a Vampire, the Nosferatu hopes to somehow redeem the mortal, to give them a second chance. It is surprising how often it works. Underneath the grim exterior, the Nosferatu are practical and mostly sane.

It is said that they revel in being dirty and disgusting and do little to make themselves look better (not that there is very much they could do). Their smell and appearance is revolting. Despite this, they are cheerful amid their squalor, especially so when others are forced to enter their realm. They are known for being grumpy and lewd, and cannot be trusted to maintain the standards of civilized society.

Though they travel through mortal society, because of their powers of Obfuscation, they are not able to interact

with it. Therefore they must live apart. The habits that grow up from such an existence extend even to their interactions with other Vampires. They avoid all contact, preferring their own solitary existence to the chaos of interactions with others.

Though they may not interact with other Vampires, they do remain cognizant of the pulse of the city. They favor such tactics as listening to the conversations of other Vampires from hiding, and have even been known to sneak into the Prince's Haven to discover the deepest secrets of this Elder. If you wish to know of any information about the city or its immortal inhabitants, you need only speak with a Nosferatu.

The Nosferatu do stay in contact with one another, and have developed a unique sub-culture among the Kindred. They play host to one another with the most elaborate politeness and gentility. They share their information among themselves, and as a result are probably the best informed of the Kindred.

Appearance: The changes that the Curse has on the members of this Clan are the most dominant of any bloodline. They sport huge fangs, their skin is coarse and wrinkled, and they typically have no hair (except in all the wrong places).

Haven: The Nosferatu most often live beneath the ground, either in dank cellars or sometimes even within the city sewer system. When they do live above ground, it is only in abandoned houses or graveyards.

Background: They tend to choose their Fledglings from the castoffs and failures of society, those who are twisted and otherwise undesirable.

Character Creation: Most Nosferatu have lower class Concepts, and tend to have a strong contrast between their Nature and Demeanor. Physical Attributes are primary, as are Talents.

Clan Disciplines: Obfuscate, Animality, Potence

Weaknesses: Nosferatu are so ugly that they have an Appearance of zero. Simply cross the entire Attribute off the character sheet. Nosferatu fail any action that involves their Appearance (they really are hideous).

Organization: They tend to look out for themselves and mingle little with others. They are united in spirit, with an established network, but never have formal Clan meetings of any sort.

Quote: *"I don't look for trouble, but if it comes, I hide from it. Damn right, pretty boy. You may call me chicken, but I've known a lot of Kindred over the years who got smart just a few seconds too late. It's not like we can't die, it's just that it don't come natural any more."*

Stereotypes:

• Tremere — Shady characters, they're up to something.

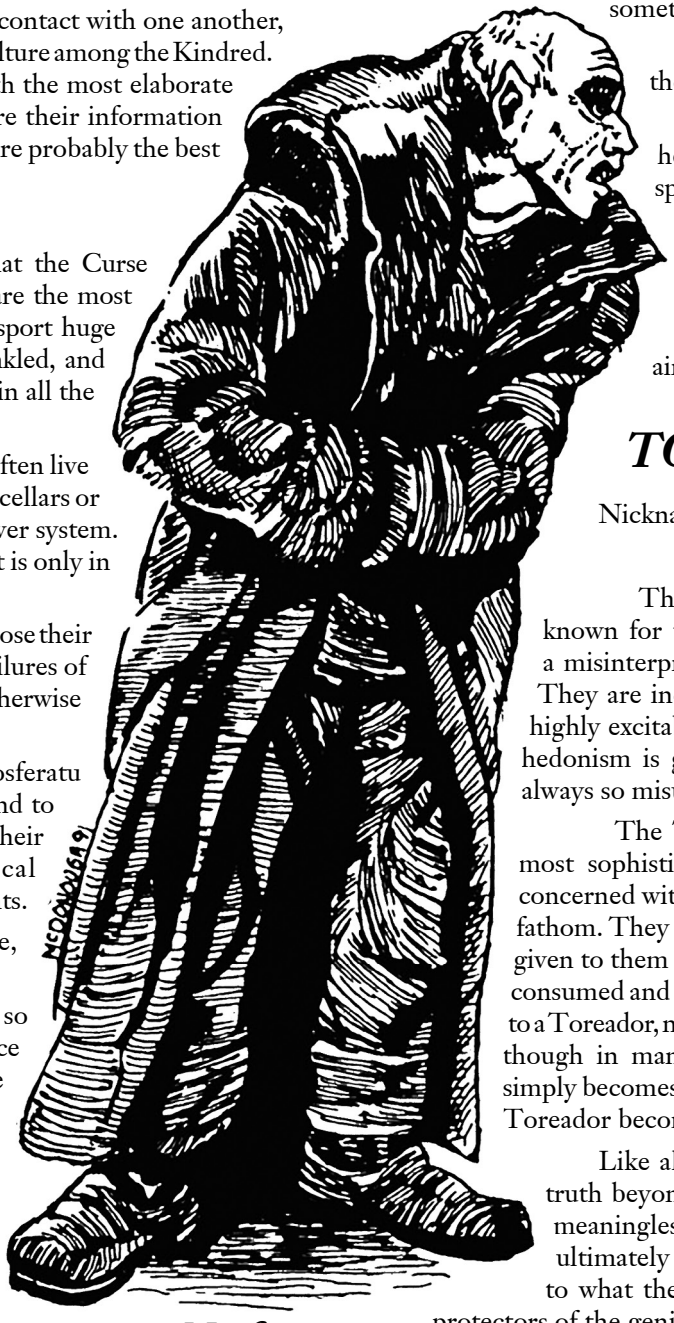
• Ventrue — Too damn proper, something's stuck up their....

• Gangrel — Good blokes, they know who they are.

• Toreador — Empty-headed whelps who should be spanked.

• Brujah — Nice enough fellas, once you get past the crap.

• Malkavian — Creepy, ain't they? Don't even trust 'em.



Nosferatu

TOREADOR

Nickname: Degenerates

The members of this Clan are known for their hedonism, though that is a misinterpretation of what they truly are. They are indeed proud and regal Kindred, highly excitable with expensive tastes — but hedonism is going a bit too far. Artists are always so misunderstood.

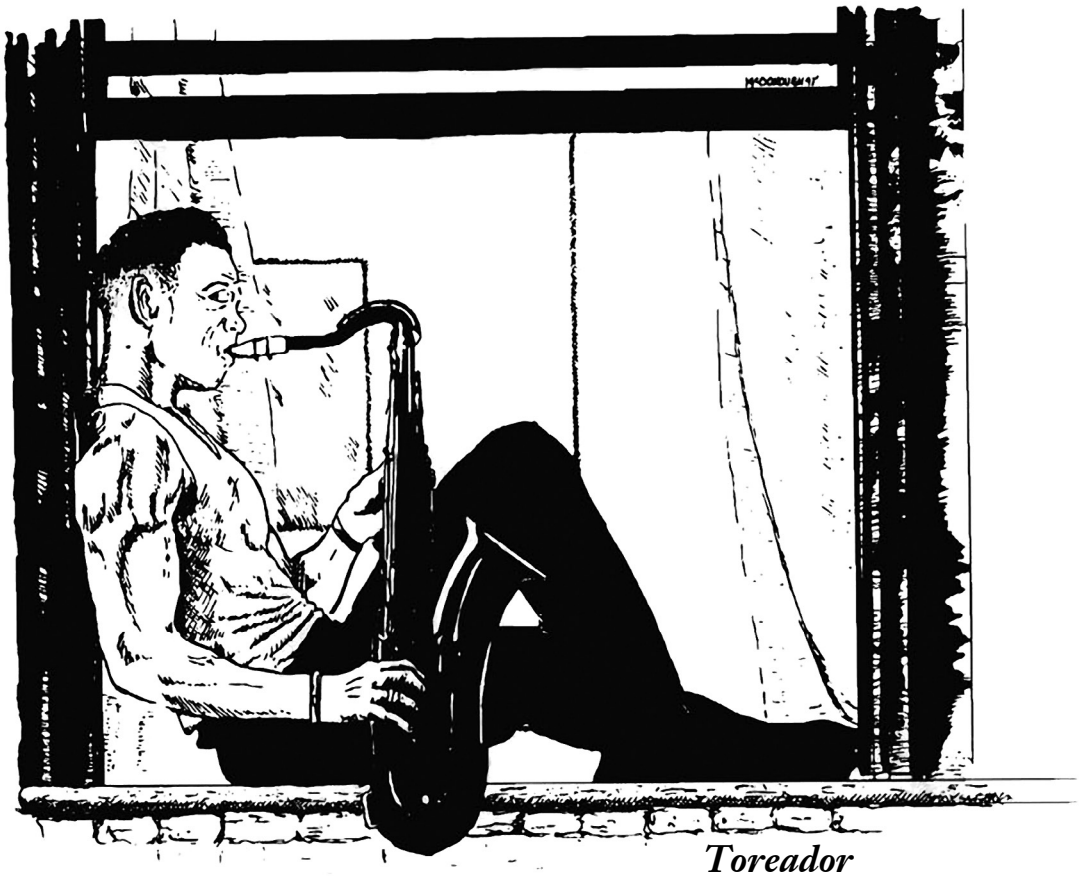
The Toreador are known to be the most sophisticated of the Clans. They are concerned with beauty in a way no mortal can fathom. They use the rarified senses and tastes given to them with the Embrace to become as consumed and impassioned as possible. Ideally, to a Toreador, nothing matters as much as beauty, though in many cases the search for beauty simply becomes the search for pleasure, and the Toreador becomes little more than a hedonist.

Like all true artists, they search for a truth beyond the existence they fear to be meaningless. It is that struggle for truth, and ultimately salvation, that has brought them to what they consider to be their mission — protectors of the genius of the human race. They are

truly in love with the vigor and passion of the mortals, and never tire of marveling at their creations.

The Clan as a whole considers itself conservators of the greatest artists of any variety. They specifically search out those who they consider to be the most worthwhile, and bring them into immortality, thus protecting their genius against the ravages of aging and death. They constantly search for new talent and spend a great deal of time deciding who to preserve and who to leave to their fate. Among the Toreador are some of the greatest musicians and artists who ever lived.

The greatest weakness of the Toreadors is their sensitivity to beauty. They so reflexively surround themselves with elegance and luxury that they themselves turn into hedonists of an extraordinary degree. Some of this Lineage become concerned with nothing but their own continued pleasure — the reputation of the entire Clan is affected by their excesses.



Toreador

Appearance: The members of this Clan are usually good looking. They always dress in the very latest fashions from the most expensive stores. Among all the Kindred, only the members of this Clan manage (or bother) to keep up with the ever-changing cycle of human fashion.

Haven: They often live in specially designed condos or apartments near the center of the city, as near the action as possible.

Background: They pride themselves on only selecting the most exemplary members of a society for initiation into their Clan. Most members were artists or musicians, and many continue their artistic pursuits in undeath.

Character Creation: Toreador often have an Entertainer or Dilettante Concept. They have flamboyant Demeanors, but may have very unique Natures. Social Attributes are primary, as are Skills. Norma! Background Traits include Fame, Resources and Retainers.

Clan Disciplines: Presence, Celerity, Auspex

Weaknesses: The members of this Clan are as much prisoners of their artistic vision and sensitivity as they are its beneficiaries. They are often overcome by the beauty they see around them, and become immobilized with fascination. Such things a paintings, neon signs or even sunrises can captivate them. It requires a successful Willpower roll to break the fascination quickly, otherwise it will end after a few minutes (or on occasion, hours). This helps explain why Toreador so often fall in love with mortals.

Organization: The members of this Clan meet frequently, though these are more social occasions than councils. In times of great urgency, they become united and ferociously active, but typically they are too apathetic to be much of a force.

Quote: *"I remember my first love, a beautiful woman with a silver laugh. For ten years we were constant companions, but in the end I had to let her go. She begged me to take her but I could not. You may call me cruel, but in the end I realized that she was not a real artist, but an imitator. She was unworthy. I don't think I have ever recovered."*

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — These loathsome beasts ought to have been expelled from the Camarilla long ago. They hate all beauty and despise us for ours.

• Tremere — Honesty is not a word we associate with this Clan, but we respect them for their dedication.

• Ventrue — The patricians of our kind, the Ventrue are the only ones with the refinement to appreciate art, though not as we do.

• Gangrel — We don't claim to understand them. Are they Kindred at all?

• Brujah — They have little respect for the accomplishments of civilization, but do understand the virtue of change.

• Malkavian — Though chaos can be beautiful, it would be a difficult life.

TREMERE

Nickname: Warlocks

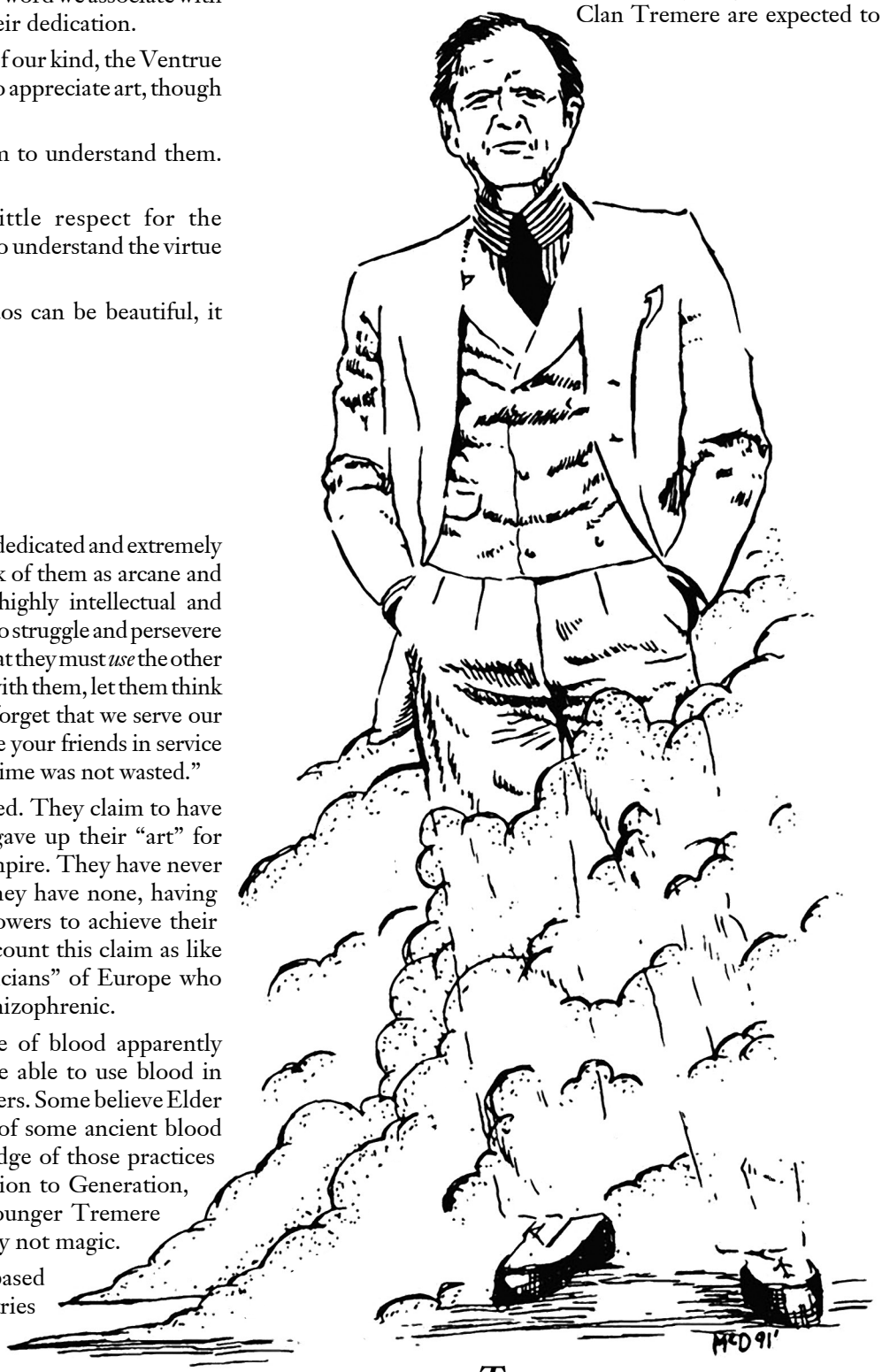
The members of this Clan are dedicated and extremely well-organized. Others, however, think of them as arcane and untrustworthy. They are aggressive, highly intellectual and manipulative, and respect only those who struggle and persevere despite all odds. The Tremere believe that they must *use* the other Clans in order to prosper. "Be friendly with them, let them think that we are one with them, but never forget that we serve our Clan first and foremost. If you must use your friends in service of the Clan, then you know that your time was not wasted."

Tremere are an odd lot indeed. They claim to have once been wizards who voluntarily gave up their "art" for the powers and eternal life of the Vampire. They have never named a Founder, and some claim they have none, having discovered and harnessed mystical powers to achieve their state. Many of the elder Kindred discount this claim as like those made by other so-called "magicians" of Europe who were almost uniformly deluded or schizophrenic.

Their links to the substance of blood apparently runs deep, as they are rumored to be able to use blood in special ways to gain extraordinary powers. Some believe Elder Tremere were actually practitioners of some ancient blood magic. They also believe the knowledge of those practices has been passed down from Generation to Generation, such that it is now viewed by the younger Tremere as natural and commonplace; certainly not magic.

The leaders of this Clan are based out of Vienna, though they have Chantries on every continent of the world. A council of seven Elders is said to control the entire Clan from the Vienna Chantry. From that locus, they maintain a tightly-ordered, highly hierarchical group, one that allows no one outside the Lineage to view their inner workings.

The younger members of Clan Tremere are expected to



Tremere

obey their Elders without question. But this is not as true as it once was. Tremere typically have immense love and loyalty for their Clan, largely because they are made Regnant by Seven Elders of the Clan. They come to love the Clan because of the love they feel for their Regent. Though there are some rebels and Anarchs from the Tremere line, it is likely they are posing as such on the orders of the Clan, as part of its long term plots.

Appearance: Their traditional grab is black coats or even cloaks with high upturned collars and arcane symbols sewn on the lining. Though this is no longer universal, they still prefer black and impressive looking clothing (such as the pinstrip power suit). Many of them also carry props, such as canes.

Haven: The Tremere Clan operates a Chantry in almost every city where it has members. All those of the Tremere Clan are welcome in any Chantry. Those who live on their own have a wide variety of accommodations.

Background: They choose the most aggressive and ambitious people as their Neonates, preferring males. They carefully train and nurture them for years, calling them "apprentices."

Character Creation: Tremere usually have a professional and highly educated Concept and their Nature and Demeanor tend to be Archetypes connected with power or science. Mental Attributes are primary, as are Knowledge Abilities. They often have the Mentor Background Trait.

Clan Disciplines: Thaumaturgy, Dominate, Auspex

Weaknesses: Tremere Neonates are Blood-Bound to the seven Elders of the Clan when they are created. This ensures that the Tremere Clan remains intrinsically bonded. Tremere characters are therefore much more tightly restrained than characters from other Clans. When the Clan calls, they *must* respond.

Organization: They are tightly organized and very hierarchical. The younger members are expected to obey the older ones without question, but this isn't happening all the time anymore.

Quote: "*We must survive Gehenna and establish the tenants of the new world order once the horror is overcome. If we are to succeed, we must control the other Clans. No more time can be wasted. If they cannot be convinced to aid us, they must be forced.*"

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — These creatures may make useful servants, but they are too noxious to tolerate for long.

• Ventrue — Too fractious to be truly effective, they are our chief rivals for control of the Camarilla.

• Gangrel — Noble Kindred, in their own way.

• Toreador — Idle hedonists, they do not understand that the Gehenna will end their way of life forever.

• Brujah — Ignorant revolutionaries, they don't even understand what it is that they oppose. They respect only power.

• Malkavian — So often they seem normal, but all their Lineage carry their strange curse.

VENTRUE

Nickname: Blue Bloods

Old-fashioned and tradition-bound, Ventrue are sophisticated and genteel. They believe in good taste above all else and work hard at making their lives comfortable. They are most frequently the leaders in the Camarilla, though they avoid what they consider to be the crude and decadent office of Prince. They are cautious, honorable, social and elegant Kindred.

The Ventrue fancy themselves a Clan of the modern world, and deny that they live in the past. This may be true of the most powerful members of the Clan, but many are not able to give up the habits and manner of dress of the time when they were Embraced. The attitudes and beliefs they held as mortals are never forgotten by a Ventrue.

They are most often found among the uppercrust of the mortal world, most mingling and fitting in quite well. Their sophistication stands them in good stead among the elite of mortal society, and it allows them to control many of the more powerful members of the city. Because of the relative ease in which most travel among such company, the Ventrue often have a monopoly on the political control of the city. If something goes wrong, it is often to them that the other Kindred turn to for control.

There is a strong Ventrue tradition that any member of the line may find safe Haven with any other member of the line, and cannot be refused. Thus many Ventrue aid their fellow Clan members before the need arises for this tradition to be called upon. However, harboring a fugitive in your Haven can have detrimental effects to one's welfare.

They are very proud of their leadership of Vampire society, and will always insist that they were the founders of the Camarilla. They will do nearly anything to retain their grip on the politics of the cities and the Camarilla, and are exceedingly protective of their reputations.

Appearance: The Ventrue do not change their ways easily, so often they will dress in very old fashioned styles — lace and ruffles, top hats and evening coats. Younger members still dress very well — preppy would best describe it.

Haven: They often make their homes in mansions, sometimes a place they lived in even as a human.

Background: Typically they select older and more experienced people as Neonates, usually someone from the upper class. Sometimes they will only select from their own mortal descendents.

Character Creation: Ventrue tend to all be of an upper class Concept, Dilettantes all. Mental Attributes are primary, as are the Knowledges. They have high Resources and some Influence as well.

Clan Disciplines: Dominate, Fortitude, Presence

Weaknesses: Ventrue have exacting and rarified tastes, even when it comes to blood. Players must pick a restriction on the type of blood their character can feed upon, e.g. only men, no animals, only virgins, etc.

Organization: Though the Ventrue Clan meets often, their councils are sarcastically called "debating societies" because of the amount of talk and lack of action. The Ventrue consider this the only civilized way to get anything done.

Quote: *"The best way to get even with an enemy is to outlive them. Because we are reasonable and above such petty concerns as vengeance, we are the leaders among our kind. Our colleagues do little to support the Camarilla, so we must bear the burden alone."*

Stereotypes:

• Nosferatu — Frightful creatures, but they can't help being what they are.

• Tremere — Good chaps, support the Camarilla 100%, but they have uncertain motivations.

• Gangrel — They are somewhat uncouth, but can be trusted.

• Toreador — Tasteful and creative, they are somewhat unrestrained.

• Brujah — Bullies and rebels all. They are uncontrollable and untamable.

• Malkavian — They are not half as crazy as they pretend to be.

Caitiff

Archetypes (Optional)

As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light of meaning in the darkness of mere being.

— C.G. Jung

There are eternal roles which people play, which have been passed down over the ages and have become a collective characteristic of our identities. The psychologist Carl Jung called them Archetypes and described them as that which describes who and what we truly are. He never tried to give names to these Archetypes, believing that you really couldn't describe them with words. However, in order to incorporate the concept into the game, we have done exactly this, so remember to take them with a grain of salt.

In stories, Archetypes tend to predominate, not only with characters but with places and things. They are a way for the Storyteller to get the audience to understand the characters and setting, and to relate it to their own lives. Archetypes help us make sense out of things, plus they can bring the story home.

Characters do not really fit into such neat and tidy categories. Archetypes are the molds for a number of different personalities, and should not be seen as absolute standards of personality. They are the original pattern, and each character varies from that original in many ways. These Archetypes are examples of the variety of personalities that can found and are intended to guide, not to restrict.

Encourage your players to develop their own Archetypes to describe their character's Nature or Demeanor. You will have to work with them, especially when it comes to the Willpower part, but this gives them a chance to create truly unique personalities.

The key to the use of Archetypes is the interaction between the character's Nature and Demeanor. The Nature is the true personality of the character, that which they are but may not reveal to others. Most people do not wish others to know them intimately, and they therefore create a Demeanor behind which they can hide their true self — a false front. The Demeanor may be as consistent as the character's Attributes, or it may change minute to minute. Extraordinarily open, honest or simple-minded individuals will have the same Demeanor and Nature.

Archetypes have a practical impact on the game, for each Archetype provides a different way in which Willpower points can be regained. The Nature of the character is thus vital in regaining Willpower. The procedure works like this: the player notices that they may be able to regain Willpower due to their actions or the situation — this varies from Archetype to Archetype. They ask the Storyteller if they can regain the Willpower points, and the Storyteller either accepts or rejects the request — always remaining somewhat conservative and frugal in how they reward Willpower. As the Storyteller, you shouldn't reward a character if you think the player was performing the actions in order to regain their Willpower and wasn't really roleplaying. For more details on how this works, see the Willpower section in the Development chapter.

• Architect: At base, you are a simple person and you like to lead a simple life. You will work as long and as hard as you need to in order to achieve this end. Your sense of purpose goes beyond your own needs and you try to create something of lasting value, for the ones who will come after you. There is much that people need — food, shelter, safety and stability, and you gain much satisfaction by providing whatever you can.

Your greatest struggle in life is creating whatever security and structure you can around yourself. You are the type of person who makes the effort to build something of value, to found a town, develop a farm or create a company. Many American pioneers were Architects in personality. Though the Architect Archetype can be seen in the traditional concept of a father, it is as often a female Trait as male.

— Regain two points of Willpower whenever you create or establish something of importance or lasting value. If the need was great, and the effort required to fulfil that need was as great, then more points can be regained (at the discretion of the Storyteller).

• Bon Vivant: There is no point to life, no meaning, no direction—so the best plan is to have as good a time as possible. Rome may burn, but you shall drink wine and sing songs. You are a hedonist, sensualist, sybarite and party animal. The words austere, self-denial, self-discipline and ascetic have no place in your life. You prefer the concept of instant gratification. You don't mind a little hard work, as long as a good time awaits you when the work is done. Most Bon Vivant's have low Self-Control, for they so dearly love going to excess.

— Regain one point of Willpower whenever you have a truly good time, when you are able to fully express your desire for exaltation (or two or three, depending on exactly how good a time you had).

• Bravo: You are an insolent and overbearing person who persists in tormenting the weak. You are a bully, a ruffian and a tough. You always want to have things your way and will not tolerate those who cross you. Power and might are what you respect the most, indeed you only listen and respect those who can display their power to you — but you listen to those people closely.

You do not see anything wrong with using your powers to force your will upon others. You enjoy the opportunity to 'straighten' people out. There is nothing you like better

than to persecute, antagonize, heckle and intimidate those for whom you have contempt. There certainly may be a tender side to you, the emotions of kindness and pity might not be completely foreign, but you find it far too easy to be aggressive and cruel. You respect those who are strong, and accept their leadership if they can prove themselves. While most Bravos despise the weak, others become their protectors.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you are able to intimidate or force another person into doing what you want.

• **Caregiver:** You are a person who is always trying to help those around you. Always concerned and empathetic to the needs and sorrows of the unfortunate, you struggle to make a difference. A Caregiver is the nurturer, the saint, the quintessential mother — though it is as often a male Trait as a female one. People around you depend on your stability and strength to keep them steady and centered. You are the one people turn to when they have a problem.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you successfully take an action that protects or nurtures someone else. It can be as small as a smile of support, or providing a shoulder to lean on. The other person must in some way be helped by what you did, but they need not acknowledge it openly.

Kyle has the eye for painting but not the skill, thus photography serves him well.

• **Cavalier:** You are as bold, intrepid, valiant and fearless as you need to be to complete your duty. You are the hero who strives to uphold your ideals and sense of justice. By protecting that which is good, you seek to preserve the society that made you what you are. If your Nature is Cavalier, and your Humanity ever falls below 4, you will have to choose a new Nature. You hate Deviants (though you don't always recognize them). Many Cavaliers don't think of themselves as heroic, only as ordinary, but that is because nothing has ever been required of them. When the need is clear, the hero within shall surely emerge.

— Regain 3 Willpower when you mange to accomplish a significant task that positively affects the group to which you belong (almost always the group of characters).

• **Conformist:** You are a follower. Taking charge is just not your style. It is easy for you to adapt, attune, adjust, comply and reconcile yourself to whatever new situation you find yourself in. You are attracted to the brightest star, the person who you feel to be the best and will go the furthest, and you throw your efforts in with them. You are especially attracted to Cavaliers. It is both difficult and distasteful for you to go against the flow, to rebel. You hate inconsistency and instability, and know that by supporting a strong leader, you help prevent chaos from occurring. All stable groups need some kind of Conformist.

— Regain one Willpower whenever your group (the Brood) makes an accomplishment because of your support and aid.

• **Child:** You never truly grew up and are still immature in personality and temperament. Though you can care for yourself, you do so poorly and require others to provide for you. Often you will seek out a Caretaker to look out for you, just as they may seek you out in order to have someone to care for. It is likely that others see you as a spoiled brat, though it is possible you could be seen as an innocent cherub instead. This is a very common archetype for Vampires who were created when they were young, who can mature mentally but not emotionally.

— Regain two points of Willpower when you know that someone is looking out for you and won't let you be harmed, when they make you feel safe, secure and protected.

• **Conniver:** What's the sense of working hard when you can get something for nothing? Why go to a lot of work when you can take the easy route and get it without pain? Just by talking to someone, you can usually get what you want. Some people might call what you do swindles or even outright theft, but you figure that you are just trying to get your way like everyone does, only you do it better. You get great pleasure out of outwitting someone. You get a

sense of victory you can't get any other way. It's a high. You are always trying to find the easy way out, the fast track to success and wealth. You may be a rogue, a swindler, a street waif, a con-man, a thief or just a finagler.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you are able to get your way by tricking or coercing another person into doing as you wish.

• Curmudgeon: At heart you are an irascible, churlish person. While you take everything seriously and find very little humor in life, you may have a wickedly barbed wit. Cynicism is your middle name, and it is the tool by which you judge everything in your life. You have a very well-defined understanding of how things really work, especially when it involves the circus of human endeavor. Long ago, you ceased to be surprised by the things people do — the world is indeed full of fools.

— You regain a point of Willpower when someone does something stupid, just like you predicted (you must predict it, either out loud to the other characters, or to yourself — tell the Storyteller).

• Deviant: There are always unorthodox people who don't fit in. You are such a miscreant, for your beliefs are completely antithetical to the status quo. Not so much an aimless rebel, you are an independent thinker who simply does not belong in the society in which you were raised. You don't give a damn about other people's morality, but you do adhere to your own strange code of conduct. You may have an honor a sorts, but it is your own unique code which others might not recognize as morality. Deviants typically have very low reverence, and can have truly bizarre tastes and desires.

— Regain 2 points of Willpower whenever you manage to accomplish something that works directly against society and its precepts (most often Vampire society, rather than mortal).

• Director: You are one of those individuals who despises chaos and disorder. Often, in order to suppress chaos, you tend to take control of a situation and organize things. You are someone who likes to be in charge, lives to organize, and habitually strives to make sure things work smoothly. Just think of the stereotypical sergeant, commandant, bureaucrat and company president, and you'll know what kind of person you are. You trust your own judgement implicitly and tend to think of things in terms of black and white, "This won't work", "You're either for me or against me", "There are two ways to do this, my way and the wrong way." You make an exceedingly poor follower.

— Regain two points of Willpower when you are allowed to take over the leadership of the group and manage to use your leadership to accomplish some significant task.

• Fanatic: You are consumed by a cause and are driven to accomplish the directives of your self-appointed mission. It is a prime force in your life, for good or ill. Every ounce of sweat and passion you have is directed towards it, and you may feel very guilty about spending time on anything else. You will let nothing stand in your way. Nothing that you cannot overcome, in any case. You and those around you may suffer, but your cause is everything — the ends justify the means. Before the game begins, make sure you describe to the Storyteller what your cause is, and how it may affect your behavior.

— You regain 2 points of Willpower when an event occurs that furthers your cause.

• Gallant: You are as flamboyant as you are amoral. Some see you as a rogue, Don Juan, rake, paramour, or lounge lizard — you see yourself as all of the above. A consummate actor who loves to make as big a show of things as possible, nothing attracts your attention more than an appreciative audience. You love people and you love to impress them even more. Though you may indeed be a consummate lover, you enjoy the chase almost as much as you enjoy the act. Gallants vary widely in temperament and ambition, the only thing they really have in common is their love of attention.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you manage to greatly impress another person. The Storyteller is the judge, especially when characters are involved.

• Jester: You are the fool, idiot, quipster, clown or comic who forever makes fun of both yourself and others. While you are constantly involved in finding the humor in and the bright side to any situation, you are always striving to fit in and battle the tides of depression inside yourself. You hate sorrow and pain, and constantly try to bring people's minds off of the dark side of life. Sometimes you'll do anything to forget that pain exists. Your brand of humor might not always impress your friends, but it sure makes you feel good. Some Jesters manage to escape pain and are truly happy, but many never really find release.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you raise the spirits of those around you through the device of humor.

• Judge: People argue and fight too much with each other, and far too much time and energy is wasted as a result. As a facilitator, moderator, arbitrator, conciliator and peacemaker, you always seek to make things better. You pride yourself on your critical judgement, and your ability to come to a reasonable and logical conclusion when given the facts. Most of all, you pride yourself in your rationality. Your constant struggle is to promote justice, but you understand that it is very difficult to ascertain the truth. However, you believe in justice and truth as ideals nevertheless.

In your view, people are the most valuable resource to be found, yet are also the most difficult to manage and employ. You hate dissention and disagreements, and tend to have few solid convictions of your own. Often the best leaders are Judges, though a lack of vision can sometimes cause them to maintain the status quo instead of searching for something better.

— Regain one Willpower when you are able to separate the truth from a web of lies or successfully convince disputing individuals to agree with your judgements.

• **Loner:** You are the type of person who is always alone, even when you are in a crowd. You are the wanderer, hunter and lone wolf. Though others might think of you as lonely, forsaken, isolated and remote, in truth you have chosen this path and prefer your own company to others. There are many different reasons why this might be so — you don't understand people, you understand people too well, people dislike you, or you are lost in your own thoughts. Your reasons are your own. You could care less what others think of you or say about you. You prefer to walk alone.

— When you manage to accomplish some significant task on your own, without the aid of others, yet which still aids the group in some way, you regain one Willpower.

• **Martyr:** All of us have the martyr instinct, but only a few of us actually allow ourselves to be one on a consistent basis. Your ability/desire to sacrifice yourself stems either from your low self image and lack of a feeling of control, or a profoundly developed sense of love for others around you. You are able to endure long lasting and severe suffering because of your beliefs and ideals.

At the worst of times, a Martyr expects sympathy and attention because of his or her suffering, and may even feign or exaggerate pain or depravation. In the best of times, a Martyr will choose to suffer death (the Final Death) rather than renounce his or her religion, beliefs, principles, cause or friends.

— Regain two points of Willpower whenever you sacrifice yourself in a real and immediate way for your beliefs or another person.

• **Plotter:** Everything you do is planned. Very little springs from you spontaneously. Your plans are often long and involved, sometimes outliving the life spans of any mortals involved in them. Details must be known exactly, for you believe any deviation could bring ruin. You try to plan out everything in your life, making each thing you do part of a ritual and a plan. Deviation is bothersome, but not traumatic (you are not deranged, just organized). You tend to be extremely neat and very precise in whatever you do.

— You regain 3 points of Willpower when any action you planned works the way you planned.

• **Rebel:** You are a malcontent, iconoclast and free-thinking recalcitrant. You are so independent-minded and free-willed that you are not part of any cause or revolution. You are just yourself and you only desire the freedom to be yourself. You do not make a good follower and aren't usually a very good leader either (unless your followers are willing to go wherever you lead). You tend to be insubordinate to authority.

— When you are able to resist someone's attempt to intimidate or coerce you into doing what you don't want to do, you regain one Willpower.

• **Survivor:** No matter what, you always manage to survive. You can endure, pull through, recover from, outlast and outlive nearly any circumstance or situation. When the going gets tough, and others start to give up, you get going. You never say die, and never give up—ever. Nothing angers you as much as a person who doesn't continue the struggle to make things better, or who surrenders to the nameless forces of the universe and no longer tries to impress their will upon it. You despise quitters.

— When you are about to fail or are in danger of not surviving a situation, you immediately regain one Willpower point.

• **Traditionalist:** You are orthodox, conservative and traditional. While you welcome some innovations, in general you are opposed to change for the sake of change — what point is there in that after all? You may be a miser, a collector, a reactionary or an old fogy. You want to conserve as much as possible and strive to always preserve the status quo.

— Regain a point of Willpower whenever you are able to protect the status quo and prevent change from occurring, such as when someone attempts to change or modify plans or rules that have already been established by the group.

• **Visionary:** There are always those among us who look beyond the confines of society and everyday thought and see something more. Society treats such people with both respect and contempt — it is the Visionary however who leads society onward to the future. You may be a spiritualist, shaman, new-ager, mystic, philosopher or inventor, but whatever you are, you are always looking for something more. You see beyond the bounds of conventional imagination and create new possibilities. Though you might have your head in the clouds and can be very impractical, often you come up with startling new ideas and concepts. When people are really in a jam and have reached the end of their rope, you're often the person they turn to — sometimes that's the only time people listen to you.

— Regain two points of Willpower whenever you are able to convince others to believe in your dream and follow the course of action outlined by your vision of the future.

Physical Attributes

These Traits describe how strong, dextrous and sturdy a character is, and are the primary Traits of an action-oriented character. Physical Traits concern only the strengths and weaknesses of the body. These descriptions explain a human's range of prowess, as a Vampire's superior abilities are represented in their Disciplines.

Strength: This is a measure of a character's mean physical strength — his ability to lift, carry and cause physical harm. Those with a high Strength rating are usually larger than someone with a lower rating. Of course, there are always exceptions.

You use your Strength when you attempt to lift, carry, push, heave or break something. In melee combat, it is added to your Damage Dice Pool. Strength is also used when you attempt to make any sort of jump or leap. The Discipline of Potence is related to Strength and is added to many Strength rolls. Additionally, Blood Pool points can be used to add to Strength temporarily.

Specialties: Strong grip, Massive, Husky, Able-bodied, Broad shoulders, Hearty, Powerful, Bulging biceps, Wiry, Large.

- • Poor: Bench press 40 lbs.
- •• Average: Bench press 100 lbs.
- ••• Good: Bench press 250 lbs.
- •••• Exceptional: Bench press 400 lbs.
- ••••• Outstanding: Bench press 650 lbs.

Dexterity: This Trait is a measure of your character's general physical prowess — speed, quickness and agility. It indicates the capacity for moving with agility and to manipulate objects with accuracy and grace. Dexterity includes hand-eye coordination, fine motor manipulation, reaction speed, reflexes and bodily grace.

The Discipline of Celerity is related to Dexterity, and is added to some Dexterity rolls. Additionally, Blood Pool points can be used to add to Dexterity temporarily.

Specialties: Smooth-motioned, Lithesome, Steady, Deft, Graceful, Nimble, Athletic, Cat-like, Swift, Sure-footed, Fleet-footed, Light touch.

- • Poor: Butterfingered, so don't use a chainsaw.
- •• Average: Can chew gum and walk at the same time.
- ••• Good: Excellent raw athletic potential.
- •••• Exceptional: Juggle five knives.
- ••••• Outstanding: Juggle five knives while blindfolded.

Stamina: A measure of general health and resistance to pain. Stamina indicates how long you can continue to exert yourself as well as how much physical punishment you can sustain. Stamina is your staying power, both physically and mentally, and one of its most important elements is the will to live.

The Discipline of Fortitude is related to Stamina, and is added to many Stamina rolls. Additionally, Blood Pool points can be used to add to Stamina temporarily.

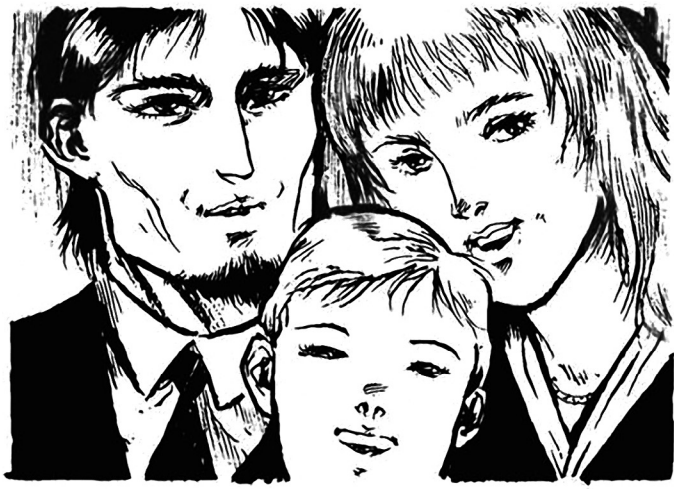
Specialties: Tireless, Enduring, Tough, Determined, Aggressive, Tenacious, Stalwart, Durable, Forceful, Dedicated.

- • Poor: You are frail in constitution and may be sickly.
- •• Average: You are moderately healthy.
- ••• Good: You are in good shape, the result of regular exercise.
- •••• Exceptional: You could run a marathon.
- ••••• Outstanding: You are tough enough to survive almost anything.

Social Attributes

Your Social Traits describe your appearance, charm and familiarity with the human mind. Your Social Traits are vital in determining first impressions, leadership ability and the nature of your interactions with others.

Charisma: This is a measure of your aptitude for enticing and fascinating others. You use your Charisma to win others over to you emotionally and to get them to trust you. This Trait is more a facet of a charismatic personality than it is an overt manipulation of others. It is a sum of the



His life is full and happy. Kyle returns home to a beautiful wife and healthy child.

character's bearing, charm and power of influence. Charisma reflects your power to convince others to put their faith in you.

Specialties: Smooth, Eloquent, Outgoing, Captivating, Charming, Regal, Genial, Smooth, Well-mannered, Urbane, Sophisticated, Rustic, Down home, Gracious.

- • Poor: Others avoid being around you.
- •• Average: You are likeable.
- ••• Good: People trust and confide in you.
- •••• Exceptional: You have something which draws people to you.
- ••••• Outstanding: You could lead a nation.

Manipulation: This Trait measures your aptitude for active self-expression, such as when you want to get someone else to do something. It is important when you are attempting to influence or manipulate another person directly. A character uses Manipulation to trick, fool, bluff, outmaneuver and out-talk another. While you may be effective at manipulating people who you have just met, those who already know you are rarely fooled.

Manipulation is used in all rolls where you are attempting to influence or convince another person overtly. Whether they like you or not is of no consequence (though it can affect the difficulty of what you are trying).

If you fail a Manipulation action and the other person realizes what you were trying to do (you botch for instance), then they may well be angered. People are manipulated all the time and usually we ignore it. However, if it is brought to our attention, it can be a very disturbing thought. Manipulation can net great results, but it is risky to do openly. Characters with high Manipulation are not well trusted by those who know them best.

Specialties: Glib, Expressive, Cunning, Persuasive, Smooth, Silver-tongued, Bravado, Ingratiating, Eloquent, Blarney, Double-talker, Sophist, Witty.

- • Poor: You express yourself in as few words as possible.
- •• Average: They might believe you.
- ••• Good: You'd make a good lawyer.
- •••• Exceptional: Run for office.
- ••••• Outstanding: Sell ice to an Eskimo.

Appearance: This Trait describes your Appearance in terms of your attractiveness and force of presence. You do not necessarily need beauty to have a high Appearance, you only need looks that somehow attract others to you. Appearance is not just your static, model beauty, it's the appeal of the way you move and talk, your animation and expressiveness. It is a measure how interesting and attractive you seem to others.

Appearance is vital in any social situation where words are not exchanged. It is more important than you might think off hand, but the impressions you get of another are heavily affected by that person's looks, no matter how open-minded you are. You may not like to admit it, but it's true.

More than simply being a Trait you use to make rolls, Appearance is often used by the Storyteller to roughly judge how others usually react to you when you first meet. Thus it can affect all other Social rolls you make with that person (in some cases, your rating determines the maximum number of successes from a Social action that can actually be applied, making it impossible for an ugly person to achieve anything other than a minimum success).

Specialties: Bold demeanor, Alluring, Captivating, Sexy, Luminous, Honest face, Imposing, Dignified, Pleasing, Handsome, Beautiful, Gorgeous, Look of the Eagles.

- • Poor: You tend to attract the hostility of others.
- •• Average: You are easily ignored for you fit in so well with the crowd.
- ••• Good: You have a pleasing appearance, and people treat you well.
- •••• Exceptional: You are good looking enough to be a model and are given respect and attention because of it.
- ••••• Outstanding: First reactions are either that of awe, intense jealousy or complete solicitude.

Mental Attributes

The Mental Traits represent your character's total mental capacity, and it includes such things as memory, perception and the ability to learn and think.

Perception: This Trait indicates how aware you are of the environment around you. While sometimes a conscious thing, such as when you are searching for something, it more often works intuitively — you simply notice something. At base, Perception is a sensitivity to the world, an open-eyed quality common among children (for whom the world is a very unbounded and mysterious place) and seldom present among the most jaded of us.

Perception is used to see if your character has the insight to understand or be aware of a certain fact or concept. It can help indicate how alert you are to ambushes, the sub text of a politician's speech, and the subtleties of color in a painting. Add your rating to all Alertness rolls, as well as many Empathy and Subterfuge rolls.

Specialties: Insightful, Attentive, Patient, Probing, Keen-eyed, Intuitive, Visionary, Astute, Apprehensive.

- • Poor: You are blind to anything but the obvious.
- •• Average: Blind to the subtle interactions that occur around you.
- ••• Good: Aware of things that are going on around you.
- •••• Exceptional: Constantly alert to the nuances of life.
- ••••• Outstanding: See a needle in a haystack

Intelligence: Your Intelligence represents both your memory as well as your ability to learn and think. It is important for Abilities that require complex thought processes. Some describe it as a person's quickness of mind or judgement, but it is more than that — it is the facility for understanding, and the capacity for reasoning and evaluation. Intelligence is a rating of an individual's depth and flexibility of thought.

Common sense, street savvy and wisdom are not components of the Intelligence Attribute, for they are facets of character that are portrayed by the player. However, low Intelligence can indicate a character without the capacity to understand complicated thoughts, and who is a very slow learner. You might simply see things in terms of black and white, and won't understand that things are really in shades of grey.

A character with high Intelligence, on the other hand, is a sophisticated thinker capable of decoding many different levels of an argument or a problem. They have a discerning judgement and are well able to tell the truth from lies, when they have the time to think it over. Intelligence caters to carefully thought out judgements rather than snap decisions, which is the realm of Wits.

Specialties: Discerning, Creative, Knowledgeable, Pragmatic, Astute, Brilliant, Bookworm, Clear Thinker.

- • Poor: IQ 80
- •• Average: IQ 100
- ••• Good: IQ 120
- •••• Exceptional: IQ 150
- ••••• Outstanding: IQ 180+

Wits: Your Wits describe your ability to react quickly and correctly to new situations, as well as your overall sharpness of mind and cleverness. In the simplest of terms, it is a measure of how quickly you think. A more complex view understands Wits as a shrewdness, sagacity and capacity for understanding problems in the most basic terms.

Those with low Wits are occasionally unable to take appropriate action because of surprise (like a deer caught in the headlights). It can indicate that you are more easily tricked and fooled than most people, for you are a gullible and unsophisticated student of human nature. If you have high Wits, you are able to react quickly to new situations and are seldom caught off guard by sudden changes in events. Whatever else happens, you will be able to keep your Wits about you.

You add your Wits rating to all surprise rolls and situations where you must see how fast you react to a sudden change in events.

Specialties: Quick-witted, Clever, Shrewd, Sharp, Practical, Wily, Level-headed, Creative.

- • Poor: You send money to televangelists.
- •• Average: Know when to bet or fold in Poker.
- ••• Good: Capable of handling L.A. rush hours (without shooting anyone).
- •••• Exceptional: Stand-up comic.
- ••••• Outstanding: You have a supercomputer for a brain — it's fast.

Talents

Talents describe all our untrained and intuitive Abilities. Talents can never be trained or studied, but can only be learned through direct experience—usually during a story. If you take an action using a Talent you do not possess, then there is no effect on your roll. You roll the number of dice equal to your base Attribute. Talents are such natural and intuitive Abilities, that it is assumed that everyone has some small capacity in each one.

Acting: You are practiced at feigning emotions, beliefs or a certain frame of mind. Even if you have never been on stage before, you could do an adequate job if you were ever thrust upon it. However, simply because you have this Ability does not mean that you use it unethically. Many honorable politicians have used it to lend power and depth to their speeches (namely, Churchill). You are able to feign tears, anger, friendliness and virtue.

- • Novice: A rank amateur, you can feign sickness.
- •• Practiced: You have developed a wide range of acting ability and you could make a person feel at ease with your performance.
- ••• Competent: You are capable of playing almost any role.
- •••• Expert: You are certainly a professional, or have that potential.
- ••••• Master: Academy Award performer.

Possessed by: Actors, Politicians, Amateur Thespians, Con men, Evangelists.

Specialties: Pretend, Roleplay, Inspirational, Feign emotion, Stage, Evangelistic.

Alertness: Over the years you have become practiced in noticing all that happens around you, even if you are not actively concentrating upon it. You are a capable bodyguard for you have learned how to stay alert over a long period of time. Alertness simply indicates how finely and acutely aware characters are of the world around them. It describes how much attention they pay to things besides the rumbling of their belly or the doubts in their mind.

- • Novice: You tend to be alert to changes, more so than most.
- •• Practiced: You are watchful and very attentive to your surroundings.
- ••• Competent: Highly vigilant, you're constantly alert.
- •••• Expert: A cautious individual, rarely do you let down your guard.
- ••••• Master: You notice everything that goes on around you.

Possessed by: Watchmen, Hunters, Bodyguards, Reporters, Burglars.

Specialties: Bodyguard, Traps, Ambushes, Forest, Crowds, Noises, Paranoid.

"Midnight Michelangelo" announces the flyer. Kyle's idol.

Athletics: This Ability describes your general athletic prowess and includes a familiarity with most major sports. It may be used to see if your character can jump across a chasm, swim through a storm, throw a football, pole vault a fence or climb a tree.

Athletics concern complex motor actions, most often encompassing the coordination of a series of movements into one effusive action. Physical actions that require only one type of motor action, such as lifting, do not use the Athletics score, nor do athletic actions already subsumed by another Ability.

- • Novice: Little Leaguer
- •• Practiced: High school jock
- ••• Competent: College-level player
- •••• Expert: Professional athlete
- ••••• Master: Olympic gold-medalist

Possessed by: Professional Athlete, Enthusiast, Dancer, Jock, Kids.

Specialties: Swim, Mountain Climb, Acrobatics, Dance, a specific sport.

Brawl: You know how to fight unarmed as well as with casual weapons such as broken bottles and table legs. This Ability includes such maneuvers as punching, kicking, grappling, throttling, throwing, gouging and biting. Brawling can get quite ruthless, but generally it is a non-fatal form of combat.

- • Novice: You know what to do, but you haven't had much experience.
- •• Practiced: You know where to hit people to make it hurt.
- ••• Competent: You can choose your bar seat.
- •••• Expert: Black belt martial artist.
- ••••• Master: Golden Gloves boxing champion.

Possessed by: Martial Artist, Army, Punk, Police Officer, Bar fighter.

Specialties: Bar Fighting, Boxing, Wrestling, Karate, Judo, Tai Chi, Grapple, Throw, Intent to Harm, Show-off.

Dodge: If you can't get out of the way, you're likely to get hit. Characters without Dodge are far more likely to get injured than those who have gained some ability in avoiding blows. Your Talent in Dodge describes your ability to avoid both melee and missile attacks, and includes diving for cover, finding cover, weaving in and out of your opponent's blows, and ducking out of the way of punches.

- • Novice: They told you to keep your head down.
- •• Practiced: You know how to find the nearest cover in a firelight.
- ••• Competent: You can safely cross a busy street.
- •••• Expert: You're harder to hit than a mosquito in a tent.
- ••••• Master: You are greased lighting, almost able to side-step bullets.

Possessed By: Street Fighters, Bouncers, Boxers, Criminals, Military.

Specialties: Leap, Side step, Cover, Dive, Awareness.

Empathy: You can intuitively understand the emotional needs of others and can therefore respond to them correctly. You can decipher the motives, background, emotions and temperaments of other people, thereby allowing you to use the information to your advantage. However, this Talent can also mean that you are personally affected by the emotions and feelings of others, and your sentiments may be affected more easily than you may want. Your Empathy rating can never be higher than your Humanity rating.

- • Novice: You are open to the feelings of others.
- •• Practiced: You understand people and their emotions.
- ••• Competent: You have a good idea of what people are feeling and why.
- •••• Expert: You could become a good psychologist.
- ••••• Master: You understand every nuance of facial expression and behavior.

Possessed by: Actors, Mediums.

Specialties: Emotions, Personality, Backgrounds.

Intimidation: This is the ability to inspire fear in others and scare them into submission by manipulating their own fears and weaknesses to use as weapons against them. It also includes basic interrogation and the extraction of information from any sort of subject, friendly or otherwise. You nearly always roll against the other character's Willpower in a resisted roll, or use it as the difficulty. If you can identify a particular fear or weakness of a character, either through your own brilliance as a player or through a successful Empathy roll, the difficulty will be lowered by one or more.

- • Novice: You are still somewhat primitive in your threats and coercion but you could easily scare a small child.
- •• Practiced: You've learned a secret or two, and can make a person feel very uncomfortable.
- ••• Competent: You are more than simply a bully, but less than an expert.
- •••• Expert: You use the best of many different techniques depending on the individual.
- ••••• Master: You're far past physical threats, you're much more sophisticated.

Possessed by: Police Officers, Criminals, Businessmen, Salespeople, Torturer.

Specialties: Nag, Browbeat, Interrogate, Threats, Violence, Suggestion, Subtlety.

Leadership: You are capable of getting people to obey your orders and follow your lead through example and by exerting authority. With a successful Leadership roll, you can convince others to obey your orders. Leadership isn't so much knowing the techniques of getting people to follow you as it is being the type of person who people will follow. Leadership is very often used in conjunction with Charisma.

- • Novice: You can get people to listen to you and could coach a Little League team.
- •• Practiced: Your voice is a dominant one and you can demand silence.
- ••• Competent: Effective military leader.
- •••• Expert: You naturally attract followers, without really trying.
- ••••• Master: You are a great leader, capable of attracting many followers.

Possessed by: Politicians, Military Officers, Gang leaders, Executives, Police.

Specialties: Commands, Orate, Compelling, Friendly, Noble, Fierce, Wise.

Streetwise: You have a lot of street savvy and know how to make your way around the underworld of any city. You know how to learn the latest gossip, find contracts, talk with thugs, and perform petty thievery. It is a familiarity with the culture of the street, the culture of the underclass, and the culture of petty criminals. Streetwise also incorporates the ability to pick pockets, shoplift and perform simple heists, "Let's hit the convenience store!" However, many characters who possess Streetwise do not use it to perform criminal acts, they just know how it is done.

- • Novice: You know how to find the hot-spots.
- •• Practiced: You know enough to get by and can deal with street gangs.
- ••• Competent: You are at home on the street.
- •••• Expert: You've got everything down pat.
- ••••• Master: The street is your domain.

Possessed by: Criminals, Kids, Street people, Reporters, Detectives, Cabbies.

Specialties: Pickpocket, Street Savvy, Cool, Drugs, Fencing, Lingo.

Subterfuge: Subterfuge is the art of verbal trickery. It is the conscious practice of techniques designed to give you the upper-hand in your relations with others, and thus it is related closely with Manipulation. You are a convincing talker, a facile liar, and are good at thinking on your feet.

Subterfuge is never simply lying, but is rather a clever rendering of carefully selected truths. Analysis of the motivations and temperaments of a subject allows for ever tightening webs of Manipulation to provide increasing advantage. Subterfuge

can be used to justify conduct, to escape the full force of an argument, and to evade condemnation or censure.

Sometimes those with high Subterfuge can get trapped in their own web of lies, and begin to base their understanding of reality upon what lies they have told others. They are so good at telling lies because they convince themselves of their veracity. Roleplaying this out can be difficult, but can make for a really cool character.

- • Novice: You've told a few lies in your day.
- •• Practiced: You're used to tricking other people.
- ••• Competent: You know what people look for when they try to find the truth.
- •••• Expert: You find it easy to get your version of the truth believed.
- ••••• Master: With you in his corner, Nixon could have beaten the Watergate rap.

Possessed By: Politicians, Casanovas, Movie Stars, Con men, Kids, Debaters.

Specialties: Whine, Bluff, Fraud, Cajole, Con, Seduction, Fast Talk, Lie.

Other Possible Talents: Seduction, Search, Guile, Intrigue.

Skills

Skills are all the Abilities that were trained and learned during apprenticeships or rigorous training. If you try to use a Skill but have no rating in it, then the difficulty goes up by one. You are simply untrained in the techniques of that Skill, and thus have a harder time accomplishing the task than someone who has at least some idea of what they are doing.

Animal Ken: You understand and empathize with animals to such a degree that you can sometimes predict their reactions and can calm them. This Skill indicates a capacity for training animals, as well as the ability to ride horses.

- • Novice: Befriend a domesticated animal.
- •• Practiced: Train a dog.
- ••• Competent: Train a seeing-eye dog.
- •••• Expert: Train an animal to perform in movies.
- ••••• Master: Domesticate wild animals.

Possessed by: Dog trainers, Circus trainers, Zoo keepers, and those who are close to nature.

Specialties: Charm, Training, Dogs, Horses, Farm animals, Birds.

Drive: You are able to drive automobiles such as trucks or cars. Simply because you have the Ability to drive a certain type of machine does not necessary mean you have before. This could certainly affect the difficulty when you attempt to do so.

- • Novice: Can operate an automatic transmission.
- •• Practiced: Can operate a shift/manual transmission.
- ••• Competent: Trucker.
- •••• Expert: Race car driver.
- ••••• Master: Stunt driver.

Possessed by: Truckers, Race car driver, Stunt driver.

Specialties: Automobiles, Semi-truck, Heavy machinery, Boat, Off road, Racing, Motorcycle.

Etiquette: You are able to ingratiate yourself with nearly anyone, and handle yourself with dignity in the manner that is required. Though you can fit in with nearly anyone, you are best in your own element—the culture from which you came (which you should choose as your Specialty even if your rating is only one or two). Etiquette is vital in any type of diplomacy or negotiations.

Etiquette allows you to understand people well and this allows you to get along adequately in most cultures. Those without Etiquette are more likely to make a mistake. Your Specialty is very important for you will understand every nuance in that culture and will feel most at home there.

- • Novice: You know how to introduce your self.
- •• Practiced: You know how to ask for help.
- ••• Competent: You know when to shut up.
- •••• Expert: You can interact at length without committing a gaffe.
- ••••• Master: You can spontaneously assimilate yourself in any group.

Possessed by: Diplomats, Miss Manners, Gentlemen, Really nearly anyone.

Specialties: Manners, Customs, Slang, Myths, Lowlife, Gang, High Society, Politics, Hollywood, Aristocratic, Middle Class, Ghetto, Foreign.

Firearms: You are familiar with many types of guns, anything from a Smith & Wesson .38 special to an Ingram Mac-10 sub-machine gun. Any sort of Firearms Skill assumes knowledge of any sort of basic firearm. Firearms Skill does not include knowledge of or the ability to use heavy weaponry such as tanks or artillery. It includes the ability to shoot the weapon correctly, as well as the knowledge of how to fix it in case the gun misfires or jams. See the Combat section of the Drama chapter for more information, page 149.

- • Novice: Point & Fire.
- •• Practiced: Know a few gun tricks.
- ••• Competent: Good skeet shooter.
- •••• Expert: Calm and steady, even in stress.
- ••••• Master: Could go toe to toe with Billy the Kid.

Possessed by: Cops, Military personnel, Gun enthusiasts, Hunters.

Specialties: Rifles, Handguns, Uzi.

Melee: This is a general fighting aptitude using hand-to-hand weapons such as swords, knives or clubs. It incorporates the ability to use many different types of melee weapons. This is a very rare Skill to possess in the modern age (though Fencing is growing rapidly), but many Elders retain the Ability from their youth, and it is commonly used among Vampires when they war.

- • Novice: Watched it in the movies.
- •• Practiced: Familiar with the weapons.
- ••• Competent: Know a few tricks.
- •••• Expert: Deadly.
- ••••• Master: Bruce Lee with a nunchuk.

Possessed By: Police, SCA fighter, Ex knight, Ex musketeer, Kendo enthusiast, Fencer.

Specialties: Sword, Axe, Rapier, Knife, Club, Sweeps, Disarms.

Music: You are a performer of music and know how to play one instrument for every level of experience you have. Of course the higher your Skill, the better you are at playing your instruments, especially the first instruments you learned. This is the ability to create music — the higher your Skill, the greater your musical ability. You should decide what instruments you play.

- • Novice: Play a few simple cords.
- •• Practiced: Can construct and arrange complex harmonies.
- ••• Competent: Accomplished musician.
- •••• Expert: Highly Talented.
- ••••• Master: A Virtuoso (write and perform a classic).

Possessed by: Rock musicians, Disk jockey. Singer, Conductor.

Specialties: Guitar, Composition, Lyrics, Tuba.

Repair: You are a Jack-of-all-Trades — though you were likely trained in one particular skill, you have a general knowledge of them all, such as mechanics and carpentry. You are generally good with your hands and are able to repair nearly anything provided proper tools and materials are available.

- • Novice: You are handy with tools (assemble a kit).
- •• Practiced: Are familiar with most mechanical devices (wire a house).
- ••• Competent: You understand most types of machinery (install a new transmission).
- •••• Expert: You have excellent repair skills (repair a printing press).
- ••••• Master: You're a natural and can repair anything (modify a radar device).

Possessed by: Handymen, Repairmen, Mechanics, Carpenters, Electricians.

Specialties: Wood, Mechanics, Electricity, Electronics, Engines.

Security: You know the techniques and are proficient with the tools used for such activities as picking locks, hot wiring a car, setting and deactivating burglar alarms, and opening up safes or vaults, as well as many other forms of breaking and entering. Many individuals possess the Security Skill who do not use it to conduct criminal activities, but rather use it to prevent such from occurring or to know how it was accomplished after the fact. This Skill is often used in conjunction with Stealth.

- • Novice: Pick a simple lock.
- •• Practiced: Hotwire a car.
- ••• Competent: Disable a house alarm.
- •••• Expert: Crack open a safe.
- ••••• Master: Fort Knox isn't safe from you.

Possessed by: Criminals, Locksmiths, Police officers, Detectives, Security specialists.

Specialties: Electronics, Speed, Silently, Pick Locks, Hot Wire, Burglar Alarms, Safes, Vaults.

Stealth: The ability to sneak about or hide without being seen or heard. Stealth is often rolled against another character's Perception. Stealth is of extreme importance when Vampires engage in the Hunt.

- • Novice: Hide in the dark.
- •• Practiced: Hide in the shadows.
- ••• Competent: You are an accomplished hunter.
- •••• Expert: You could walk silently over two inches of dry leaves.
- ••••• Master: Ninja clan-leader.

Possessed by: Criminals, Spies, Reporters.

Specialties: Prowl, Hide, Lurk, Shadows, Crowds, Crawling.

Survival: The wilderness is a dangerous place, at least for those who do not understand it. Includes finding shelter, a direct route and relative safety in the wilderness, and tracking. When you use Stealth in the wilderness, you cannot roll more dice from your Stealth rating than you have in Survival.

- • Novice: Can survive a five mile hike.
- •• Practiced: Familiar with the wilderness.

••• Competent: Know how to brew natural medicines.
•••• Expert: At home in the wild.
••••• Master: You could find an oasis in Death Valley.

Possessed by: Tribesmen, Hunters, Park rangers, Hikers, Native Americans.

Specialties: Tracking, Arctic, Jungle, Hunting.

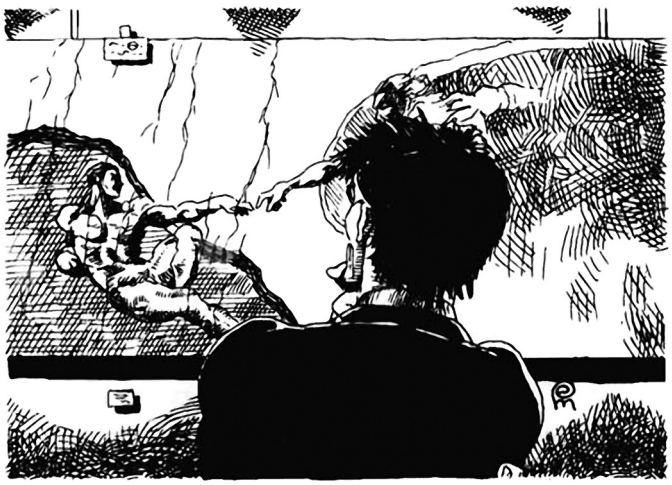
Other Possible Skills: Pilot, Cook, Boating, Police Procedure.

Knowledge

Knowledge includes all the Abilities that require the rigorous application of the mind, not the body, so usually nothing but Mental Traits are used to modify Knowledge rolls. Though the ratings discuss Knowledge in terms of a college degrees, school is not the only way to gain Knowledge — it is simply the most common. These are school learned Abilities for the most part, but self-study or tutoring are also possible.

If you do not have a Knowledge, then you cannot even attempt a roll that involves it. There are exceptions, however, such as when the Storyteller rules that the roll only involves trivia level Knowledge, things that anyone has a chance of knowing.

Bureaucracy: This includes the ability to bribe city officials and make your way through the political system. This Knowledge also includes an ability to operate a bureaucracy, which of course includes at least a rudimentary sense of organization. In fact, this Knowledge can be seen as the preeminent organizational ability in the game.



Kyle's thoughts are as lovely as dreams when he gazes upon the master's works. But just as God created Adam....

• Student: Have good organizational ability.
•• College: Understand power structures (who is really in control).
••• Masters: Can perform stalling tactics indefinitely (befuddle politicians).
•••• Doctorate: Perform high administrative duties.
••••• Scholar: Could manage to get a meeting with the U.S. President.

Possessed by: Lawyers, Politicians, Journalists, Administrators, Bureaucrats.

Specialties: Negotiation, Intrigue, Bribery, Diplomacy, Thwart, Delay, Bypass the system, Bluff.

Computer: You are knowledgeable in the operation and programing of computers. You may also be capable of designing and creating computer systems. As a hacker, you are at least capable, and if a character wishes to break into a computer system, he needs this Trait.

• Student: It's a hobby, though you can perform basic procedures.
•• College: You are a competent programer and understand the hardware.
••• Masters: You can design hardware, as well as program software.
•••• Doctorate: You can program anything, given time.
••••• Scholar: You could program and construct a super computer.

Possessed by: Hackers, Systems analysts, Programers.

Specialties: Hacking, Security, Programing, Hardware, Sales, Software.

Finance: You are knowledgeable enough about the values of many different things so that you can properly evaluate the worth of many different objects. With your practiced eye, you can judge the value of almost any kind of good with a fair degree of accuracy. Often used in connection with other Abilities, Finance is the one way to ensure you are getting a fair price.

• Student: You are able to perform basic accounting and can accurately keep the ledgers of a business.
•• College: Having either gone to a school of management, or somehow gained practical experience, you understand higher management.
••• Masters: International Banker.
•••• Doctorate: Skilled at market analysis.
••••• Scholar: Economic genius capable of making money do nearly anything.

Possessed by: Accountants, Mangers, Businessmen, Economists.

Specialties: Accounting, Corporations, Leveraged buyouts, Management, Investing.

Investigation: You are practiced in noticing all sorts of details others might miss. This also indicates a character's ability to do research, both in libraries and through interviews.

- • Student: Amateur detective.
- •• College: Police officer.
- ••• Masters: Private detective.
- •••• Doctorate: FBI, CIA, KGB, MI 5, Interpol agents.
- ••••• Scholar: Sherlock Holmes.

Possessed by: Detectives, Insurance investigators, Reporters, FBI agents, Intelligence agents.

Specialties: Search, Prowl, Tail, Detective.

Law: The law is not a thing to trifle with and those with knowledge of the law are well able to use it to their advantage. If you ever want to get out of jail, this Ability is essential.

- • Student: Practical knowledge, police officer.
- •• College: Prelaw, beginning lawyer.
- ••• Masters: Lawyer, full partner.
- •••• Doctorate: Judge.
- ••••• Scholar: Supreme Court Justice.

Possessed by: Police, Lawyers, Judge, Detective, Criminals, TV viewers, Legislator.

Specialties: Courts, Contract, Litigation, Criminal.

Linguistics: It is assumed that you can speak your natural language, but you must purchase any other languages that you wish your character to speak. For each level of Linguistics, your character may fluently speak another language. However, beyond simply the accumulation of more languages, Linguistics gives a character an understanding of the structure of language, which is in turn the basis of thought. With this Ability, you can identify accents or decipher word puzzles.

- • Student: One additional language.
- •• College: Two additional languages.
- ••• Masters: Three additional languages.
- •••• Doctorate: Four additional languages.
- ••••• Scholar: Five additional languages.

Possessed by: Travelers, Scholars.

Specialties: Curse words, Technical, Diplomatic, Political.

Medicine: Medicine is the study of the human body and of the techniques to cure its ills. While a Vampire's body is different, Medicine can be used to treat it of its most serious wounds as well. It includes knowledge of the structure and functions of the body, the use of medicine, and the diagnosis and treatment of disease.

- • Student: You possess first aid and know the basics of setting bones and preventing shock.
- •• College: You have paramedic quality training.
- ••• Masters: You are a doctor and can diagnose and treat diseases.
- •••• Doctorate: You can perform surgery.
- ••••• Scholar: You are a specialist of great renown.

Possessed by: Doctors, Paramedics.

Specialties: Pharmacy, Paramedics, Emergency care, Disease, Surgery, Specialist (specify).

Occult: You are knowledgeable in the occult, particularly in Vampire lore. This understanding of the more sinister side of the world includes knowledge of curses, voodoo, magic and mysticism, and contains much that is only speculation and fantasy. This Knowledge is of the utmost interest to many Vampires and pursuit of this Knowledge may indeed become a major facet of your Chronicle. Any character who has a four or five Ability has real and true knowledge of Vampires and other aspects of the occult (mostly of what is patently false).

- • Student: You've dabbled, but aren't in the know.
- •• College: You're starting to know what's going on.
- ••• Masters: "There are things out there, really."
- •••• Doctorate: You know a few arcane secrets.
- ••••• Scholar: Fully initiated in many of the great mysteries. You don't need your Sire to tell you what's going on!

Possessed by: Weirdos, New agers, Occultists, Scholars, the curious.

Specialties: Vampires, Witches, Mystical powers.

Politics: This Knowledge provides a familiarity with the politics of the day, including who is in charge and how they got there. This can be an essential Ability when attempting to deal with mortal authorities in any way. This Ability has some influence on being a capable politician yourself, as long familiarity with a subject can sometimes give one ideas...

- • Student: Protester or casual observer.
- •• College: Campaign worker or political science major.
- ••• Masters: Campaign manager or speech writer.
- •••• Doctorate: Politician.
- ••••• Scholar: Master Politician.

Possessed by: Lobbyists, Politicians, Lawyers, Protesters.

Specialties: Neighborhood, City, Congress, Elections, Machiavellian, Orate, Dogma, Radical.

The impossible has happened, her King has returned. Though now mortal, soon he will be hers again – forever.

Science: You have at least a basic understanding of physics, chemistry, botany, biology, geology and astronomy. Your knowledge deals more with the useful application of Science.

- • Student: It's a hobby.
- •• College: Understand the major theories and applications.
- ••• Masters: You could teach high school science.
- •••• Doctorate: Great depth of knowledge.
- ••••• Scholar: Albert Einstein.

Possessed by: Engineers, Researchers, Inventors, Technicians, Pilots.

Specialties: Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Relativity, Nuclear physics.

Other Possible Knowledges: Psychology, Art, Philosophy, Theater, Journalism, Military Science, Geography, History, Theology, specific area of knowledge/ trivia.

The Disciplines

Cold late nights so long ago,
when I was not so strong you know,
A pretty man came to me, never seen eyes so blue,
You know I could not run away
It seemed we'd seen each other in a dream;
Seemed like he knew me, he looked right through me."

— Heart, *Magic Man*

Disciplines are the supernatural powers that Vampires possess which separate them from mortals. A strong human can lift as much as a strong Vampire, unless the Vampire also possesses the Discipline Potence, which dramatically increases Strength.

The existence of these "mystical" powers is a mystery to almost all Vampires. Normally, Kindred simply accept the powers as yet another indication of how their kind is superior to mortals and all other creatures that walk the Earth. Whatever their source, Disciplines are intrinsic to a Vampire's existence, and all Vampires have some Discipline or another.

There are ten different Disciplines described here that Kindred may possess. Like all other Traits in **Vampire**, Disciplines are rated from one to five. The rating that a Vampire has in a particular Discipline should be noted on the character sheet, where the names of these powers may be written in. Extremely powerful Vampires may well possess

abilities beyond the scope of these Disciplines, but we do not describe them here.

Characters usually begin the Chronicle with three points in their Clan Disciplines — those powers which are most often associated with the Clan to which the character belongs. However, additional Disciplines may be gained be spending "Freebie" points during character creation.

Each Discipline is described alphabetically hereafter:

Animalism: Animalism concerns friendship for and empathy with the animal world. It is an expression of the Beast which lurks within every Vampire. This Discipline grants Vampires those powers which have to do with animals, with the exception of those that involve taking animal form, which is an aspect of the Protean Discipline. Anyone with this Discipline can understand and soothe the emotions of animals, as well as control the creatures at higher levels of ability. Vampires who do not have this Discipline may be considered offensive to animals, for beasts do not feel comfortable around them.

As the Storyteller, give each animal a unique personality and manner of speech. Eventually, they may become friends of the characters, so the better you can portray them in the beginning, the longer the animal will seem interesting to the player. Remember that animals may be simple-minded and take things quite literally.

The Gangrel Clan have named these powers of Animalism with names which reflect their feelings toward their animal kin.

• **Song of the Beast:** Most animals are not intelligent enough to carry on a lengthy discourse on any subject, but some Vampires can attempt a limited form of communication with them. Such communication takes place mentally — there is no need for a Vampire to "meow" or "bark" to communicate her ideas to an animal. The character needs only to look into the animal's eyes to initiate the conversation. Eye contact must be maintained throughout. If it is broken, then eye contact will have to be re-established in order to speak with an animal once again.

A Vampire may communicate in this fashion with almost any sort of animal. Creatures without obvious eyes or that do not see (e.g. starfish or bats) and lower life forms (e.g. insects) may not be the subject of this Discipline. Of course, there is no guarantee that an animal will either desire to talk with a character or even deal honestly with that character.

Depending on the nature of the character's Beast-within, the approach of the conversation with the animal will differ—it is not completely up to the character to decide, but is perhaps consistent with the character's Nature. The approach taken might be that of intimidation, teasing, cajoling, rationality, emotional pleading, or practically anything. Have the player roleplay through it, but make sure that they understand that they are not simply playing themselves, but the Beast-within.

The player should roll Intelligence + Animal Ken (or any other appropriate socially oriented traits that correspond with the Beast of the character) to determine the level at which they can communicate with an animal (difficulty is normally 6). Only one roll may be made per animal. If eye contact is broken and later re-established, then the player must roll again, but the degree of communication cannot be any deeper than the first result (however, the level could end up being less). Only after a Vampire's Animalism rating has increased may she roll without restriction to communicate with the same animal.

1 success	May understand the animal's basic motives (e.g. wants food).
2 successes	May talk "baby-talk" with the animal.
3 successes	Basic communication is possible and the character can expect responses to straight-forward questions.
4 successes	Complete communication up to the animal's potential is possible.
5 successes	Complete communication with the full trust of the animal. It will not mislead the character.

•• **Call of the Wild:** The essence of the animal has grown strong enough in you that animals will respond when you call. Therefore, you can summon nearly any type of animal to you, and nearly every type of that particular animal will respond and arrive as quickly as they can. Your summons may be very complicated, though the Storyteller will assign a higher difficulty if you get too carried away. For instance, you could simply call all the rats that hear your plea, or you might ask for one rat in particular or for all rats with white fur. However, in one summons you may not call animals of different species.

Only one summons may be active at a time and there is no way to cancel a call after it has been made. So the Vampire had better do it and get it right the first time.

Animals called in this way are under no obligation to heed the commands of the caller, unless the Vampire has Animalism 3, in which case they may be directed as a group by very simple instruction. If the caller does not possess an Animalism Discipline of 3, the animals will tend to avoid the caller and at least not harm her.

Roll Charm + Survival to determine how well your call is received by the intended targets (difficulty is normally 6) and consult the table below. In each case, conditions for an animal to respond and the distance that it will travel are listed. The distances listed are for city/wilderness.

1 success One of the animals described that are within 1 city block/ a half mile will respond, unless they have an owner (e.g. a dog would not leave its master).

2 successes	Only about a quarter of the animals described that are within 2 city blocks/1 mile will respond,

	unless it would be life-threatening to do so.
3 successes	About half of the animals described that are within 5 city blocks/5 miles will respond, unless it would be life-threatening to do so.
4 successes	A majority of the animals described that are within a half mile/7 miles will respond, unless it would be life-threatening to do so.
5 successes	All animals described that are within 1 mile/10 miles will respond, even if it is dangerous to do so.

••• Sweet Whispers: You are able to convince animals to do a "favor" for you, even if it might endanger them. Essentially, you are able to issue complex commands to a single animal once you establish eye contact. The animal will follow the commands to the best of its ability. However, the command must be couched in terms of a request, and the animal must be coaxed into it. The "favor" cannot be too complex for the intellect of the animal to comprehend. For instance, a mouse would be incapable of distinguishing between people, while the color blind dog could not be told to bite the woman with the red hair. No animal would know how to attack the person "who strikes me with the intent to harm."

However, these commands can be deeply implanted, so that they will affect the animal for some time. For instance, you could instruct a cat to come and get you when anyone enters the cellar, and the cat will continue to do so for some time (but not forever; eventually it will forget).

Have the player roll Wits + Animal Ken against a difficulty of 6. Circumstances may call for the difficulty to be changed, e.g. the Vampire owned the dog as a mortal. Refer to the table below for the amount of control that is established.

1 success	The animal at least paused to consider the command. It will heed the command if it's in the animal's best interest.
2 successes	The animal will probably do as the Vampire commands, but may expect a "treat" or other reward in return.
3 successes	The animal will do as instructed, unless the command goes against the nature of the beast.
4 successes	The animal will heed the command unless doing so would unduly threaten its life. A dog would attack a man, but not if the mortal was carrying a gun in plain sight.
5 successes	The animal will blindly follow any command.

•••• Sharing of Spirits: By staring into the eyes of an animal, you may allow your spirit or conscious mind to move within the animal. This allows you to control the actions of the animal as if you were the animal. If the possession is successful, then there is nothing the animal may do to prevent your control until your time limit has expired (see below). The character's body remains motionless during this time, exactly as if the character were in Torpor. You may not use any of your other Disciplines while in the body of an animal.

While in the animal's body, the character acts just like that animal — the spirit is pure, but it is clouded with the needs and impulses of the animal body.

Sometimes after prolonged periods of time inside the mind of a particular animal, a Vampire will begin to think like an animal, even after the connection has been broken. The player behaves like the animal she was, retaining many of its instincts for a time. This will continue, until she uses 7 Willpower points to resist and overcome the effects.

At the end of any particular exciting incident, the player should roll Wits + Empathy to retain her own mind. Failure indicates that the Vampire must immediately release the animal and return to her own body or be forced to roll every turn to remain sane. A failure then is like botching the first roll. A botch on the roll indicates that the Vampire returns to her own body and enters Frenzy.

Note that by employing this power, it is possible for a Vampire to travel about during the day, albeit in the body of an animal. However, you must be awake to do so, and therefore must successfully make an Awake roll (see the Drama chapter, page 143).

Successes	Possession
1 success	up to one hour
2 successes	up to six hours
3 successes	up to one day
4 successes	up to one week
5 successes	indefinitely

••••• The Roving Beast: When a Vampire achieves this level in Animalism, she has attained an indisputable understanding of the mysteries of humankind's wild cousins. Armed with this knowledge, a Vampire is better able to deal

with the Beast within herself. While this Beast is too powerful to control, at a rating of 5 Animalism, the Vampire may be able to transfer the feral urges when they begin to overwhelm her.

Essentially, this amounts to forcing Frenzy upon another animal, man, or Vampire when the Vampire with the ability begins to enter Frenzy. The recipient of this vast, savage energy may only be something that is fit for the burden. All wild animals, men and Vampires with a Humanity of less than 7 are suitable victims. Higher Humanity beings are simply not wild enough to have this Beast forced upon them.

The creature actually has the Beast of an outsider within them, thus the personality of the character will be apparent in the nature of the Frenzy that the target undergoes. The Frenzy will progress just as if it were the original character undergoing it. If the Vampire leaves before the Frenzy is over, she will lose her Beast, perhaps even permanently. While she will no longer go into Frenzies, she will not be able to use, gain or regain Willpower and will become increasingly lethargic. To recover the Beast, the character must find the person who now possesses it (who probably won't be enjoying herself much) and retrap the Beast. She must behave and act in ways that will make the Beast want to return since, unfortunately, the Beast does not always wish to return.

The player should roll Manipulation + Animal Ken to see if the attempt to transfer the Beast to another person is successful. The player must announce the victim of the transfer prior to rolling. Refer to the table for the results.

1 success	You successfully unleash the Beast, but in your crazed state, you release it upon a person or animal in sight that you know well (i.e. a friend or currently controlled animal).
2 successes	You are successful, but stunned by the effort and may not act at all in the following turn.
3 successes	You are successful.
4 successes	You are successful. In fact, if your target is unsuitable by virtue of having high Humanity, you sense it early and may spend a Willpower to switch your target to the being nearest your original mark.
5 successes	Your attempt was an extreme success. In fact, even if your chosen target is invalid by virtue of having too high a Humanity, you instinctively chose the nearest acceptable target.

If the attempt fails, or if the Vampire tries to transfer the Beast to an unsuitable (high Humanity) victim, then the Frenzy the Vampire is experiencing will multiply in intensity. When the Vampire relaxes in expectation of relieving herself of the savage desires of the Beast, the Beast takes that opportunity to dig deeper. The Frenzy will last at least twice as long and be twice as hard to shrug off.

A botch on this roll is even more catastrophic. The heightened Frenzy of the Vampire is so extreme that not even Willpower points will be effective in curbing its duration or effects.

Vampires with a Humanity greater than 8 should not be allowed to use this facet of the Animalism Discipline without rolling for Humanity loss.

One major drawback of using this power of the Animalism Discipline often is that the Vampire begins to rely on it as a defensive mechanism. If in the Storyteller's opinion, a character uses this power often, then he may require a Self-Control roll of the player of the Vampire may cause the Beast to rove even if such is not desired. In such cases, the target is normally whoever is closest.

Auspex: This Discipline is one of awareness, sensitivity, empathy and extrasensory perception. Those with this Discipline tend to be strongly affected by environmental phenomena, especially beauty. Loud noises can be very disturbing. Nearly all Auspex powers require some variation of a Perception roll to see how much is learned and understood.

- **Heightened Senses:** You can sharpen all five of your senses to an extreme degree. This is done at will, and lasts as long as you desire. This allows you to double your normal range of hearing and seeing, in terms of both distance and the conditions in which they are effective. Using increased olfactory sensitivity, you can track even if there are no tracks left, and you can identify almost anything by touch alone. You can also see in the dark, not perfectly, but with much better clarity. If there is no light at all, of course, then even heightened senses cannot help you. When a Perception roll is being made in mundane circumstances (e.g. do you hear the drunk around the corner?), double your Perception rating.

There is a drawback, though, as loud noises or bright lights can disturb you while in this state. You may even become "mute" in that sense for a period of time (depending on the degree of loudness or brightness, it could be days). Thus, if you see sunlight, you may be blinded for a week, even after the aggravated damage sustained is healed.

Additionally, your heightened senses may alert you with premonitions of danger. These premonitions are typically confusing, but they can be quite helpful as well. The Storyteller rolls a character's Auspex whenever it is appropriate. The difficulty varies according to the circumstances (and whim). This should be rolled in secret in case the character fails.

•• **Aura Perception:** The character can see the color of the aura of other beings, thus determining their mood and level of tension. This power also helps you recognize Vampires when you meet them. The player must make a Perception + Empathy roll, the difficulty in almost all circumstances is 8 (as the Storyteller, you may want to make this roll for the player so that he doesn't know if he failed or botched). Each success indicates that more of the aura is seen and can be understood (see the chart below). A botch indicates some sort of misleading interpretation. An aura may be looked at only once with clear vision. If the character attempts to look at it again, any failure should be considered a botch, as it is very easy to imagine seeing what you want to see when it comes to auras.

See the Aura Colors chart for examples of some of the predominant colors that can be found and what emotions they represent.

1 success	You can only distinguish primary colors (red, blue, yellow).
2 successes	The precise color shade can be identified — this indicates the subject's current mood
3 successes	Subtleties of colors can also be recognized and the subject's Demeanor may be distinguished.
4 successes	Changes in colors can also be detected as you maintain sight of the aura. This allows you to recognize changes in mood.
5 successes	You can identify the color at the base of the aura and determine the subject's true Nature.

She could strike now, but it is too soon. The prey must come to her.

Aura Colors

Condition	Aura Colors
Compassionate	Pink
Generous	Rose
Angry	Red
Desire or Lust	Deep Red
Sense of Justice	Orange
Conservative	Lavender
Aggressive	Purple
Excited	Violet
Suspicious	Dark Blue
Calm	Light Blue
Depressed	Grey
Distrustful	Light Green
Obsessed	Green
Envy	Dark Green
Bitter	Brown
Hate	Black
Innocent	White
Idealistic	Yellow
Spiritual	Gold
Sad	Silver
Vampire	Appropriate color is pale
Adrenalin	Rapidly Shifting Colors
Psychotic	Swirling Red
Confused	Mottled Shifting Colors
Day Dreaming	Sharp Flickering Colors
Extreme Condition	Rippling

A person's aura is not composed of only one color—it is much more complicated and subtle than that. The aura is usually a mixture of several different shades, with different parts of the aura being different colors. The aura may shift between the different colors in a predictable cycle, or it might shift completely at random. The colors change along with the current emotional state of the character, and because people so often have mixed feelings, so is the aura mixed in color.

The effective range of the Aura Perception is within eyesight, which can vary depending on the light and weather conditions (rain can be very confusing, since you see rainbows everywhere). However, sometimes the character will notice a particularly strong aura that is not within eyesight by simply getting a sense of someone else nearby and a clue to the color of his aura.

••• The Spirit's Touch (Psychometry): The character is able to pick up objects and gain impressions of the one who last held it. This object reading is limited, but it can reveal something about the subject. Such things as the race, sex, age, emotions and aura can be discerned. Psychometry can also reveal how the owner came to possess the item, as well as a "snapshot" of the last moments the subject held the object. The player must make a Perception + Empathy roll. The difficulty is determined by the age of the impressions, and the mental and spiritual strength of the person who left them. The number of successes determines the amount of information gained.

1 success	You determine the main colors of the subject's aura.
2 successes	The sex, name and age of the subject come to mind.
3 successes	You know the basic thoughts and emotions of the subject at the time the object was last handled.
4 successes	A "snapshot" of the last time the subject had the object is pictured in your mind.
5 successes	You know how the subject acquired the object.

•••• Telepathy: The character is able to probe the surface thoughts of any nearby subject. Given enough time, a Vampire with this power can learn nearly anything about a person. For instance, you might be able to divine the Sire of a Vampire with Telepathy. The player must make an Intelligence + Subterfuge roll with a difficulty equal to the subject's current Willpower. One success must be rolled for each individual item of information plucked and level of the consciousness pierced.

The Storyteller should describe the mind of the subject by using a series of adjectives akin to a stream of consciousness. This forces the player to deduce for himself what is going on in that mind. For example, you might say, "sullen, where is Damien?, worry, wait until he hears this, excitement." As is apparent, it can be somewhat difficult to understand what is going on in there, especially in the minds of the deranged.

The Vampire mind cannot normally be read, but a Willpower point may be expended to make the effort. After the point is spent, Intelligence + Subterfuge is rolled as normal.

••••• Astral Projection: Vampires with this power are able to expand their consciousness to such a degree that they can separate their mind from their body and control the movements of this metaphysical "astral" self. This astral self may be directed to travel anywhere on Earth and may even press the outer limits of the Earth's atmosphere in its travel. However, as the astral body reaches the outer most point of the Moon's orbit, the Vampire will encounter what has been referred to as the Limit of the Lunar Sphere. It is impossible to move beyond this barrier.

The physical body left behind is motionless as if in a Torpor. The mind of the Vampire is with the astral body and the Vampire has no way of knowing what is going on around his body. Indeed, for all the Vampire knows, the body may be burning. No sensations from the body are felt until death is but an instant away.

The Vampire's astral self is connected to his real body by a "silver cord," a diaphanous line that ultimately grounds the consciousness of the Vampire to his body. If this cord is ever cut during an astral mishap, then the Vampire will immediately suffer Final Death unless he can manage to make it back to the physical body. One Willpower must be spent per turn in order to make the effort to return. Upon return, the Vampire must make a Willpower roll (difficulty equals the number of turns the return journey took) or his Auspex rating drops to 4. The strength of will to journey astrally must be rediscovered (i.e. the character must spend more experience points to raise the rating back to 5).

Each time a Vampire enters the astral realm, they must spend a Willpower point. Then, the player must make a Perception + Occult roll (difficulty is normally 6, but may be higher or lower depending on how much astral traveling the Vampire has done) to determine how well the character perceives astral reality. Essentially, this determines whether or not the Vampire is able to find his way to a destination, and the number of successes determines how close the character comes to that destination. A new roll must be made each time the character determines a new destination. Failure means the Vampire is lost and must roll Wits + Courage (difficulty is two higher than the first roll) to reorient himself and attempt the Perception + Occult roll again. A botch means that the character has snapped his silver cord. Of course, a Vampire that is lost may always find his way back to his body by backtracking along the silver cord.

Travel at a speed of 500 miles per hour is possible for an astral self. Also, a character's astral self is naked — no mundane physical world objects may accompany the character, though there are rumors of magical artifacts capable of astral travel.

A character in astral space may not interact with those of the physical world unless he spends a point of Willpower. This allows the Vampire to manifest in a ghost-like form for one turn. However, the character can view events around himself that occur in the physical world, and can probably do

so without fear of detection. Aura Perception and Telepathy can be used at will. Physical world characters with the Auspex Discipline may roll Perception (only) to detect an astral body nearby. The character's rating in Auspex determines the number of successes necessary — a Vampire with an Auspex of 1 needs 5 successes while one with an Auspex of 5 needs only 1 success.

When two astral characters encounter one another, or if one encounters a being native to the astral world such as a ghost (who are often tied to one location), then they may interact as if both were on the physical world. Talking, "physical" contact, and even combat are possible. Since it is impossible to actually harm another astral character, the goal of conflict is always to cut your opponent's silver cord. The Physical Attributes are not, of course, effective, so Social or Mental Traits must take their place on certain rolls. Thus Wits might replace Dexterity, Manipulation replace Strength, and Intelligence replace Stamina.

Combatants must roll Intelligence + Stealth (to reflect a character's intellectual ability to control the movement of his body) with a difficulty equal to the opponent's Wits. If either combatant achieves three successes more than an opponent, then the winner has sheared the other's cord, though the winner may at any time choose to flee. A botch counts as one success for the opponent. If neither character gains a success, then the two silver cords have become entangled and further movement by either will rip both cords. Only by cooperating at this point may the cords become disentangled.

While in the Astral Plane, no Disciplines other than Auspex may be employed. It is said that those who are lucky enough to know they way may journey to Arcadia, otherwise known as Faerieland, by traveling through astral space, though that may also require a higher Auspex rating.

Celerity: This Discipline explains the superior quickness of Vampires. A rating in Celerity allows the character to move extremely quickly in times of stress and take multiple actions in a single turn. While anyone can decide to split their Dice Pool during a single turn, characters with Celerity can perform extra actions without penalty.

One extra action is allowed per point of Celerity, and the Vampire may use his or her entire Dice Pool for each action. However, Blood Points must be spent in order to achieve these extra actions, though the effects of these Blood Points last for the entire Scene as normal. Characters must spend one Blood Point per extra action they wish to take in a turn, and only one point may be spent per turn.

For instance, if you have a Celerity of 4, and wish to have five actions a round for the duration of the scene, you will need to spend one Blood Point in each of the next four turns. Ancient Vampires do not necessarily have this restriction, for some are able to use more than one Blood Point a turn. An elder with high Celerity makes for a deadly killer.

A character may always add his Celerity to rolls involving Dexterity, and Celerity also counts when calculating how fast a Vampire can run.

However, there is a speed limit, simply because body tissue can withstand only so much stress. Vampires may gain Dexterity + Celerity up to a total rating of 10, but to go beyond that requires that the Vampire have lived more than 100 years (see rules for this in future supplements).

Dominate: This Discipline reflects a Vampire's mysterious ability to command others (usually mortals) and ensure that the command is heeded. It is an aspect of the power of the mind and the will. It affects the judgement of the target, not the emotions.

Dominate always requires eye contact with the subject in order for it to be employed, therefore it is sometimes known as the Piercing Gaze. Dominate is one of the most useful Disciplines, but it is also very hard to employ successfully.

Resistance to a Vampire's Domination attempt may be rolled using the subject's current Willpower rating (if the subject does not wish to risk losing Willpower, no roll needs to be made). This is an opposed roll against the total of the Vampire's Attribute + Ability used for each power. Each success gained with this roll negates a success earned by the Vampire. Obviously, if enough Willpower successes are rolled, then the Vampire's attempt may be completely foiled. A complete success also means that the subject may spend one Willpower point and render himself immune to future attempts by the same Vampire for the duration of the current story. Vampires may add their Dominate rating to such resistance rolls. It is not possible to Dominate another Vampire who is of stronger Blood — you must be of an earlier Generation than the subject for Dominate to be effective.

Orders and suggestions must always be given verbally to those who have been Dominated. The extent to which control over a subject is possible is delineated with each power below.

Over time, an individual can be conditioned by you, so that he or she is thereafter unable to resist Domination. Kindred will often do so to their servants to ensure loyal retainers. This capability is primarily a function of the rating 5 power Possession, but you may also rule that mortals who have been Dominated several times have a harder time resisting further attempts. Plus, this can be a mystery to the Vampire presently Dominating the mortal. Who else controlled this mortal recently?

There are some mortals known as "neutrals" who cannot be controlled, but only one in a million mortals is so protected. Additionally, the Inquisition has certain rituals they can perform to render a mortal immune. The best of the witch-hunters are neutrals or are protected by such rituals.

Those with the Dominate Discipline tend to be people who like control. Over time, those whorely upon it may become overtly manipulative and controlling. At the Storyteller's

discretion, such characters may be unable to spend experience points to increase more subtle Abilities like Empathy.

• **Command:** You are able to give one word commands to others, which they must obey. This one word command must consist of simple and concise words which typically have only one meaning — jump, sit, stand, run, hop, blink, smile, frown, cough. If the word is at all ambiguous, the subject will react with temporary confusion. You may include the word in a sentence, and only stress the command word slightly, thus concealing from others what you are doing.

•• **Mesmerize:** After looking deeply into the subject's eyes for at least a turn, you may implant a suggestion into the unconscious mind. This requires several minutes of intense concentration, and the careful and precise use of instructions in order for the intent of your orders to be carried out properly. You may cause the mesmerization to take effect immediately, or you can designate the events which will trigger the release of the suggestion. You have to maintain eye contact for as long as you desire to mesmerize the subject.

The suggestion usually will not force the subject to do something innately against her Nature, though this can be overcome at higher powers. Finally, only one suggestion may be implanted in a subject at a time.

Manipulation + Leadership is rolled to determine how successfully the suggestion is planted.

1 success	The subject will begin to heed the suggestion, but will ultimately shake it off.
2 successes	The suggestion is effective, though the subject cannot be forced to do anything that seems strange to her. The subject might walk outside, but is unlikely to pretend to be a chicken.
3 successes	The suggestion is effective unless it is against the subject's Nature. A business man won't pick a fight with someone, but a bouncer will in a heartbeat.
4 successes	The suggestion is effective unless heeding it would directly threaten the life of the subject. The business man will now fight, but he won't charge a man with a shotgun.
5 successes	The subject will heed any suggestion.

••• **The Forgetful Mind:** With this power, Kindred are able to steal, create and remove memories from a subject. This is a very effective technique for causing people to forget that they ever met you or that you drank their blood. A lot of mischief can be caused with this power, as it is possible to steal a particular memory from one subject and implant it in another.

The player rolls Wits + Subterfuge and may consult the table to see how much may be done to the subject's memory.

1 success	You may determine exactly what the subject recalls of a certain incident. You don't change the memories, just which ones the subject remembers.
2 successes	You may make slight alterations to the memory. The subject knows someone bit them on the neck, but maybe it was a lover and not a Vampire.
3 successes	Simple, yet complete, alterations are possible.
4 successes	You may alter large portions of the subject's memory.
5 successes	Wholesale changes to the subject's memory are possible. This may require some amount of time during which eye contact must be maintained, but entire periods of the subject's life may be reconstructed.

•••• **Conditioning:** This is effectively a suggestion power without end, as a Vampire can cause the subject to do whatever she wishes until the Vampire is forced to stop (like when she must return to a Haven for the coming day). The subject will obey your commands expressly, as long as the subject is in your presence. Maintaining eye contact is no longer necessary after the initial suggestion is given.

The player rolls Charisma + Leadership with success as indicated for Mesmerize. Kindred may give exact commands to another person, like "climb up that ladder" or "pretend that you're a dog," or the control can last longer and be much more subtle.

••••• **Possession:** A Vampire can now take complete control of another person's mind and body. The subject can be so completely Dominated that the Vampire's presence, let alone eye contact, is no longer required to maintain absolute control. The subject will continue to obey each and every order.

However, the power of Possession is not something that is effective on the drop of a hat. It takes time to carefully cultivate the subject's mind for the kind of control the Vampire will exercise, though an especially brutal and immediate takeover is possible with five successes. Such a violent Possession turns the subject into an automaton that is

completely incapable of independent action. In a crisis, though, a Vampire may be forced to exert such extreme control.

The process of acclimating a subject to Possession takes a considerable amount of time, but once it is completed, the character may add 1 to their Retainers rating. Essentially, a Vampire must completely strip away a subject's Willpower in order to gain complete control. Once per day, the Vampire and her subject square off in an opposed roll. The subject rolls Willpower and the Vampire rolls Charisma + Intimidation. If the Vampire wins, then the subject loses a point of Willpower. A victory by the subject really does nothing but prolong the struggle. However, during the next opposed roll, the subject may roll her original Willpower rating instead of the current value, even though no Willpower has actually been regained.

A Vampire may not Possess other Kindred. Such control over other Vampires is only possible through a Blood Bond.

Fortitude: This Discipline explains Vampires' great resistance to harm that would incapacitate any normal mortal. Any time Stamina is rolled, you may add your character's Fortitude to the Dice Pool to reflect this extra capacity to resist damage. Most often, this advantage is useful in combat when a Vampire rolls Stamina + Fortitude to soak damage.

Fortitude provides another very special benefit to Vampires that possess it—they may use this Discipline to resist the damage of sunlight and fire. Stamina is of no use when resisting such aggravated damage, and Kindred without Fortitude must simply mark Health Levels off on their character sheet. However, if you possess this Discipline, you may roll it (only) to soak the damage.

However, there is a limit to this resistance, simply because body tissue can withstand only so much stress. Vampires may gain Stamina + Fortitude up to a total rating of 10, but to go beyond that requires that the Vampire have lived more than 100 years (see rules for this in further supplements).

Obfuscate: You excel at hiding among and away from crowds. When you do not wish to be seen, others, especially mortals, rarely notice you even if you're standing right in front of them. Your Obfuscate rating adds dice to any Stealth roll you make, but it does much more as well (see powers below).

When Obfuscate is used against a Kindred with Auspex, an opposed roll must be made (Alertness + Auspex vs. Stealth + Obfuscate). If you win, the Kindred either does not see you or doesn't realize your true appearance.

This power to hide and blend into one's surroundings is a natural adaptation by a Vampire, and unless they purposely make themselves seen, they can remain obscure indefinitely. At higher ratings, Vampires may slowly fade from the view of those around him simply by not thinking about remaining in sight. Otherwise, no roll needs to be made, as mortals have no capacity to divine the location of Kindred with this Discipline. To make things interesting, you may rule that those with psychic powers may be able to see the Vampire directly.

Auspex and Obfuscate are opposed to one another, so Vampires can add Auspex to resistance rolls to see through Obfuscate.

Children are sometimes able to see through Obfuscate, especially those who have not bought into the reality of their parents and who retain their own unique perspective on the universe.

• **Cloak of Shadows:** Your ability to hide is not yet very potent, so you need the help of some sort of cover in order to conceal yourself effectively. Most often, such cover is the shadows of an alley or a recessed door frame, but this may also work if you can interpose a tree or lamppost (no matter how narrow) between yourself and the one from whom you hide.

Once under cover, a Vampire using this power must remain completely motionless in order to remain obscured. If the Kindred moves, or if a viewer moves to an angle from which the Vampire is in their direct line of sight, then the Obfuscate power fails.

No roll needs to be made, since the Obfuscation succeeds once the criteria have been met. However, those with Auspex higher than the character's Obfuscate will see right through the shadows.

•• **Vanish:** Your power has advanced to such a degree that you may actually disappear from plain view for a short period of time. Even if you are standing face-to-face with a mortal, you may exercise this power and simply vanish for one turn. Use of this ability requires the expenditure of a Willpower point, but it can be worth it when a pack of angry mortals have you staring down the muzzles of a dozen automatic weapons. You can disappear and run as fast and as far as you can for one turn.

Those who witness such a disappearing act, especially if they are mortal, are normally stunned with indecision for a turn. One member of a large group might be able to react (in the above example, one mortal might fire aimlessly when the Kindred disappeared), but this is the exception.

This power is also very useful to get behind an opponent while engaged in combat. You will doubtlessly think of many other uses as well.

Another aspect of this power is the ability to make people forget that they ever saw you. This is a mental extension of your physical ability to disappear. You are so skilled at hiding that even the memory of you is lost. Roll Appearance + Stealth in an opposed roll against the victim's Intelligence + Alertness. If you win, you are forgotten, but must leave immediately or be seen again.

••• One Thousand Faces: This potent ability does not hide you from the gaze of others, but it does make you appear to be someone other than who you truly are. Your appearance does not actually change, you simply make people think that they see something else.

The player should roll Manipulation + Acting to determine how well the character broadcasts his different look. Refer to the chart to see how successful the attempt is.

1 success	You look a little bit different, though someone might still be able to pick you out of a police line-up.
2 successes	You look different, but each person that sees you would describe you differently. (This option may be desired at times and may be chosen as long as the player rolled two or more successes.)
3 successes	You successfully broadcast the look you desire.
4 successes	Not only do you look different, but you also appear to move and act differently to those around you. Four successes are required, for example, to successfully disguise yourself as a member of the opposite sex.
5 successes	As per four successes, but you may change your appearance for the next hour without having to roll again.

•••• Unseen Presence: Your powers of remaining unseen are now so potent that you can effectively cause yourself to disappear indefinitely. Though you are affecting peoples' minds rather than actually becoming invisible, the end result is much the same — you simply can't be seen.

You are completely ignored unless someone is specifically looking for you. They will move about in ways that cause them to avoid you and will even take actions that take them out of your vicinity. Their unconscious mind will do nearly anything to prevent their conscious mind from coming to the awareness that you are there.

If you speak or engage in violent physical activity (e.g. combat), you will draw attention to yourself. The Storyteller may ask for a Wits + Stealth roll to determine how well you use this power. Several successes may allow you to speak and still not be seen, though never can you attack someone and not be seen (at least at this rating).

Most individuals cannot make any sort of roll to attempt to see you if you do not call attention to yourself. However, those with Auspex can attempt an Auspex + Alertness roll (difficulty 9). Five successes are required for them to know exactly where you are, but one success is enough to be alerted to your presence.

••••• Cloaking the Gathering: This incredibly manipulative power allows you to extend any of your Obfuscate powers to those around you. You can affect one additional person for every point of Stealth you possess. See the appropriate power above to see what you must roll to determine how successfully you use the power. Your single roll determines the effectiveness for everyone; each character does not roll separately.

If one character compromises the disguise or invisibility, then only he is no longer under the protection of your powers. However, if you are the one who compromises the position, then the cloak drops completely and everyone may be seen.

Potence: This Discipline explains the superior strength that Vampires possess. Your rating in Potence adds directly to your Strength almost every time you roll that Attribute. This additional Strength allows for great feats to be accomplished, far beyond what a normal mortal would be able to perform. See the rules in the Drama chapter for details on how much weight a character can lift.

As long as you are simply weight-lifting, the automatic success rule applies. However, if you are combining different Physical Traits in one action, such as lifting a car and then flipping it over, a roll is always required.

Potence also allows Vampires to jump and leap greater distances, since Strength is the determining Attribute for such feats.

However, there is a limit to Strength, simply because body tissue can withstand only so much stress. Vampires may gain Strength + Potence up to a total rating of 10, but to go beyond that requires that the Vampire have lived more than 100 years (see rules for this in future supplements).

Presence: There is something about you that attracts people. The Presence Discipline is a power over the emotions of people, not their judgment or mind. Unlike Dominate, it can be used on many people at the same time. Presence is not something you can turn off or on, but it reflects something that you are. It is closely related to the Charisma Attribute.

It is not possible to give people orders using Presence, as the power is completely non-verbal. You can cause others to feel things or react in certain ways toward you, but direct manipulation of their mind is the domain of Domination. However, unlike Dominate, eye contact is not required for Presence to be effective. Often, Presence will simply affect everyone within sight of the character. It is a powerful, if subtle, Discipline.

• **Awe:** Everyone near a Kindred with the Presence Discipline invariably feels more intense emotions concerning that character. They are mentally cowed, seem to sense the enormous energy of the character, and will do nothing to incur her wrath. Though they do not necessarily have a desire to serve or befriend the object of their awe, people affected will generally do whatever they can to avoid angering or upsetting the Vampire.

The exhibition of full Vampiric powers can cause a feeling of awe in mortals, and in this case fear usually results. This is usually accomplished by baring teeth and claws while hissing loudly. While most Vampires are capable of performing this action, those with Presence are the best at it.

She stalks her prey and lover to learn of him and prepare for his Embrace.

Have the player make a Charisma + Intimidation roll (difficulty equals the victim's Wits + 3). Each success reduces the number of dice the victim is allowed to roll the next turn by one. This may be attempted only once per turn, though if performed in successive turns, the Vampire may collect successes as an extended roll in order to completely subjugate and terrify the victim. The victim may eventually lose so many dice that she will be unable to anything but curl up on the ground and weep. Failure indicates that the attempt has faltered. All collected successes are lost and the victim may act normally again. However, the player must start over from the beginning next turn. A botch indicates that the victim is not at all impressed, and Awe from the Vampire will never be effective against them again.

•• **Entrancement:** Entrancement is often effective in convincing others to serve a Vampire. The subject of Entrancement will be enchanted with the Vampire and will desire to serve her needs.

However, unlike a person Possessed with Domination powers, subjects of Entrancement retain their freedom of action and creativity. This can be both good and bad. The subject is certainly much more enjoyable to be around and tends to remind a Vampire of the cruelty of control less often, but such victims can be unpredictable in how they will attempt to please the Kindred. Because so much freedom of will is maintained, an Entranced person does not count as a new Retainer.

The player rolls Appearance + Empathy to Entrance a subject. The number of successes determines how long the condition will persist in the victim. There is no way to extend a period of Entrancement; indeed, once the condition wears off, the victim is likely to think ill of the Vampire, as if the victim's attention and love had been rejected.

1 success	one hour
2 successes	one day
3 successes	one week
4 successes	one month
5 successes	one year

••• **Compulsion by Attraction:** This causes all those around you to be intensely attracted to you. They will do anything reasonable to be close to you. They are fascinated, but not so completely consumed that they will endanger themselves. They have obsession for you, but it's not an entirely blind one. The effects last only as long as the subjects are in your presence, but the next time they see you, the feelings are likely to be reawakened (even without another roll).

By carefully using this power, Kindred can seem to have phenomenal powers of mass communication. Since Presence uses emotion to sway victims, it doesn't really matter what a Vampire says, but Kindred with a developed Presence Discipline can convince people of a certain course of action or the nobility of a purpose. In fact, there is one story of a Vampire who used this power so effectively that centuries ago she escaped punishment at a trial staged by the Inquisition.

You need to roll Appearance + Acting (difficulty equals the subject's Willpower). Those affected can use Willpower points to overcome the effect, but must continue spending Willpower every few minutes for as long as they remain in the same area as the Vampire to whom they are attracted. However, as soon as a number of Willpower equivalent to the number of successes rolled is spent, the Attraction may be completely shaken off and the subject can't be affected for the rest of the scene.

The number of successes on a roll also determines how many people can be affected:

1 success	one person
2 successes	two people
3 successes	six people
4 successes	twenty people
5 successes	everyone in the Vampire's immediate vicinity (e.g. an entire auditorium of people)

•••• **Summon:** With this power, you may call a person from a very great distance and that person will come to attend to your desires. The subject of the Summons may not know exactly why they are walking across the room toward the cloaked stranger, but the Kindred's powerful appearance will completely entrance the subject.

Vampires have been known to Summon a person from half-way around the world, where the subject would get on a plane or boat to join the Vampire. Such is indeed possible, but in order to Summon a person who is out of sight, the Vampire must have previously met the person. When a person is Summoned, she knows exactly where to find the character and will home in on that location flawlessly. If a Vampire Summons someone from New York to Chicago but subsequently departs for Seattle, then the subject will arrange for travel to Seattle as well.

The exact time it takes for a subject to fulfill the Summons can vary, but the subject will always take the fastest available method of travel. Real world concerns like money limit the response time, but if the subject happens to be short of cash and can't afford a plane ticket, there's always hitch-hiking. The Summons must be repeated each day if it takes more than one day for the subject to reach the Summoner — each Summons roll lasts for one day.

The player should roll Charisma + Subterfuge. Normally the difficulty for a Summon roll is 5, but if the subject is a stranger, the difficulty increases to 7. If a Kindred previously used the Presence Discipline on the subject, then the difficulty is only 4, but only if the attempt was successful — otherwise it is a 9. The number of successes indicates what reaction the subject has:

1 success	The Vampire can summon any subject within the same room.
2 successes	The Vampire can summon any subject within the same block.
3 successes	The Vampire can summon any subject in the same city.
4 successes	The Vampire can summon any subject on the same continent.
5 successes	The Vampire can summon any subject from anywhere in the world.

••••• **Majesty:** This incredibly effective power is much-prized by those who possess it, for it practically guarantees the safety of the Vampire who can use it effectively. Kindred cannot use this power to actively influence others, but that's not a flaw.

A Vampire with Majesty is someone who is almost universally respected and/or feared (raise both Influence and Status Backgrounds by one at no experience cost). Unless mortals or even Kindred stop to consider their new feelings about the high-Presence Vampire, they are likely to suddenly begin treating the Vampire with more respect and not be aware of the change.

Respect? The sight of the Vampire causes jaws to drop in awe and even the most courageous to inexplicably know fear. The Vampire simply *seems* so formidable that no one would even consider crossing her, let alone making a physical challenge. Anyone desiring to do so must make a Courage roll (difficulty is the Vampire's Charisma + Intimidation). Kindred may spend a point of Willpower to overcome such feelings if the roll is failed.

Those who fail, or Kindred who do not spend the Willpower, will do whatever is necessary to avoid incurring the wrath of the Vampire. This power is yet another reason why Ventrue so often dominate proceedings within the Camarilla.

Protean: This Discipline allows Vampires to transform either their entire bodies or parts of their bodies into something that is not human. No roll needs to made; the transformation is automatic and takes only one turn to accomplish. However, in the case of the total body transformations (Earth Meld, Wolf, Bat and Mist) one Blood Point must be spent each time a change is made, including going back to mortal form.

You can use most other Disciplines while in this form; only those that are obviously unusable will be adversely

affected (e.g. most Presence powers). Those in animal form may therefore still read auras and communicate with animals. Only when a Vampire is in Mist form should additional restrictions be applied. For example, eye contact cannot be made, so Domination powers can function.

Those possessing this aptitude to any degree have a strange tendency to mutate slightly in appearance over time, even to the point of gaining unnatural features such as enormous eyebrows or dark, leathery skin. These features get more obvious the higher the rating achieved. Each character will have some sort of side effect, though the player is allowed to choose freely what it will be. You may rule that one feature must be added or altered for each rating point a character possesses.

Finally, no transformations are possible when a Vampire is staked through the heart. Some suspect that this is possible at higher levels of ability, but it has never been confirmed.

• Gleam of Red Eyes: The vision of a Kindred with Red Eyes can be very eerie. Essentially, the Vampire's whole eyes glow a bright red and show hints of an infinite depth. With Red Eyes active, a Vampire can see perfectly in normal darkness. Sight is even possible in complete darkness (e.g. an underground cave where there is no light at all), a fact that perplexes the scientific-minded among the Kindred.

•• Wolf's Claws: The character is able to grow one inch claws on each finger at will. The claws make excellent weapons in combat and a Vampire uses them as part of a Brawling attack (see Melee). Wounds caused by the claws are especially vicious. In fact, the wounds cannot be healed normally through the use of Blood Points. The wounds caused should be considered aggravated damage (see page 119).

••• Earth Meld: One of the most-prized powers that a Vampire can possess, Earth Meld has saved the lives of countless Vampires through the ages. Characters with this power do not so much assume another form as they make the earth part of themselves. Those viewing an Earth Meld will simply see a Vampire sink into the ground.

It must be earth that the character sinks into. It is absolutely impossible to meld into earth through another substance. For example, there may be earth underneath it, but linoleum floor will positively restrict the use of this power. However, the Storyteller may rule that it is possible to meld into stone or concrete. Doing so requires a Stamina + Survival (difficulty equals at least 7). Failure means that the Earth Meld is impossible and the Vampire must seek pure earth. A botch indicates that something went wrong and part of the Vampire is trapped within the stone. The Vampire may either try to free himself by rolling again at difficulty 10 (further botches mean the Vampire is caught even more) or spend one Willpower point to pull oneself free. In the latter case, one aggravated wound will be taken per time the character botched the roll. Seven botched rolls mean a character has managed to accidentally merge with the rock. Note that to escape thereafter, the Vampire will have to spend a Willpower point and will be incapacitated with aggravated wounds.

Regardless of the dangers, Earth Meld is a great way to find cover when outdoors. Being one with the earth prevents contact with sunlight and also provides a way to sleep away the centuries. Many ancient Vampires use Earth Meld to sleep, and gain strength and power. Some whisper that many ancient Vampires still sleep within the ground and will soon awaken. This will signal the arrival of Gehenna.

•••• Shadow of the Beast: This power is very simple — the Vampire may transform into a wolf or bat. When in the form of either creature, a Vampire benefits from all of the obvious advantages (the increased senses of the wolf or the bat's ability to fly). As noted above, most other Disciplines can be used while in animal form.

••••• Mist: A Vampire power of legend, the ability to transform into Mist grants numerous benefits. The very being of a Vampire seems to slowly float apart when this power is employed.

All sorts of advantages are gained by those in Mist form. The Kindred may float in any direction at walking speed, may not be affected by physical attacks, and can slip through the tiniest of openings with ease. Additionally, difficulty numbers to resist the effects of sunlight may be halved by those in Mist form. The sunlight passes right through the vapor, but can still cause harm.

Contrary to popular opinion, Vampires in Mist form are not particularly vulnerable to powerful winds. Wind, even that of hurricane strength, cannot tear a Mist form Vampire apart. However, strong winds can blow the vapor cloud just as any other object may be pushed. Take the Vampire's Strength into account when determining how stiff a wind the Kindred can resist.

Thaumaturgy: ***Note :*** *Thaumaturgy is easily the most complicated of all the Disciplines, so feel free to ignore it until you completely understand how to integrate it into your Chronicle.*

Few Vampires are able to practice the exceedingly rigorous Discipline of Thaumaturgy. This is the practice of magic, and is largely the providence of the Tremere Clan, who guard its secrets jealously. Thaumaturgy consists of four disparate areas of mystical power: Blood, Fire, Telekinesis, and Weather Control.

Rituals

At the first level of Thaumaturgy a Vampire gains the ability to cast Rituals. By learning the basic concepts of magic, the apprentice acquires a familiarity with magic and forms the basis for the future powers that may be gained. The story result of this is the apprentice's ability to use Ritual magic. Rituals are carefully prepared, but often powerful, techniques for magic use that must be performed under very specific circumstances.

Each Ritual in **Vampire** will be rated in power from 1 - 5 (or higher). A character must have a Thaumaturgy rating at least equal to the rating of the Ritual in order to perform it successfully. Rituals will take at least 5 minutes per rating to cast.

Sometimes material components are required as stipulated by the Ritual itself. These could include such things as feathers, wood splinters, mud, herbs, bones, eye of newt and frog's toes. Blood is used in many Rituals.

At the first level of Thaumaturgy, the Vampire learns 1 level one Ritual. In order to learn further Rituals, a character cannot simply expend experience points. Rituals require the character to find a teacher (or document) which can instruct them in the proper procedures and incantations. Learning how to perform a Ritual properly can take anywhere from only a few days (level one Ritual) to many years (level five Ritual).

Below are several examples of some level one Rituals. If you want to include higher rated Rituals in your Chronicle, you will have to create more. More will be said on Rituals in future products.

• Defense of the Sacred Haven: This one hour Ritual may be performed to ensure that no sunlight may pass through any window within twenty feet of where the Ritual is performed. Sunlight is simply reflected by the windows. This wonderful power functions only as long as the Kindred that performs it is within the Haven. A drop of blood, the caster's own, must be placed on each window in the Ritual's area of effect. At least one Blood Point will thus be used.

• Wake with Morning's (Evening's) Freshness: This half hour Ritual must be performed immediately before a Vampire prepares to sleep through the coming day. A period of complete meditation is required. Any interruption or the performance of other activities after the Ritual, but before sleep, will make the magic ineffective. The Ritual's magic allows the protected Kindred to immediately awaken at any sign of danger during the next day. The rule of how Humanity restricts the number of dice usable during the day is waived for the first two turns of action. Thereafter, it is once again effective, but no matter what the character's Humanity or condition, he will awaken in time to perhaps alleviate the danger. Feathers are required to perform this ritual, and they must be burned and the ash spread over the sleeping area.

• Communicate with Kindred Sire: This very practical Ritual takes only twenty minutes. After completed, the Ritual allows a Vampire to speak telepathically at any distance with his Sire. Modifications of the Ritual throughout the years also allow the Vampire to speak with any Kindred who has been Blood Bonded to the caster and even anyone who has partaken of the Vampire's blood since the most recent sunset. The communication is two-way, and unlike the Auspex power of Telepathy, the Vampire may not probe the target's mind. You need to possess an item which once belonged to your Sire, and that object is destroyed before the communication is established.

• Deflection of Wooden Doom: This one hour Ritual must be performed while completely surrounded by a circle of wood. Anything wooden, even furniture or wood shavings, will work, but the circle must be unbroken. Thereafter, the Vampire at the center of the circle need not fear being staked until the sun next sets. Though only the first attempt is deflected, any wooden stake that is about to plunge through the Vampire's heart will instead instantly disintegrate. In order to activate the power of the Ritual, the stake must have actually been ready to penetrate the Vampire. A stake merely held near the Kindred's heart will not be affected. A wood splinter must be placed in your mouth, at the end of the Ritual (if the splinter is taken out of your mouth, the Ritual is nullified).

• Devil's Touch: This Ritual causes a mortal to be cursed, so that all those around who do no have a close emotional tie with the subject will feel a distinct dislike for them. They will, in effect, hate the mortal and will do all they can to make the mortal's life miserable. This effect lasts only for one night, and disappears with the first light of day. The mortal needs to be present for the Ritual to be effective, and a penny (or any coin that is owned by the Thaumaturgist) must be placed somewhere upon the mortal's person (such as in a pocket).

Paths

The other powers gained by continuing study in the arts of Thaumaturgy will reveal that a Vampire has four paths to choose from — Blood, Fire, Telekinesis and Weather Control. These paths are often referred to as Forms. One of the four Forms must be selected at each of the next four levels of Thaumaturgy. The Form selected at Thaumaturgy rating 2 is considered the character's Primary Form. At each rating thereafter, a character must choose another of the three remaining Forms — these are the Secondary Form, the Tertiary Form and finally the Subordinate Form.

When a new Form is initially learned, the first power listed underneath it is gained (see the charts below). Thereafter, additional powers may be gained by spending additional

experience points. Additional Primary Form powers cost two experience points each, Secondary and Tertiary powers cost three points each, and Subordinate powers four points each.

Each time these individual powers are employed, a Willpower roll must be made. A failure on the roll indicates that the action still succeeds, but a Willpower point is lost. Of course, this means that there is always a chance that the character can botch and lose a Willpower point, but whoever said that "magic" was without its risks?

The Taste of Blood: While the use of magical arts pertaining to blood were very limited during the early years of Clan Tremere, the Form has been developed for obvious reasons. Each rating describes some new power that may be performed. Additional powers may be created, though be careful of the rating you give the power. If any rolls are required, then it is Intelligence + Occult. A botch indicates that all of the character's Blood Pool is lost — it instantly evaporates.

• The Vampire gains very simple Perception-based abilities that relate to blood, such as determining how much blood is in a Kindred or mortal. May be able to tell the approximate Generation of a Vampire by reading the power of his Blood.

•• By successfully rolling against difficulty 7, a Vampire may spend one extra Blood Point in a single turn to increase a Physical Attribute or heal an additional Health Level of damage.

••• Simple manipulations of blood are possible, like the ability to make the blood within your body more potent for a short time to effectively lower your Generation. The difficulty of this is 8 and successes must be spent to both decrease the Vampire's Generation and create a duration in hours.

•••• The Kindred can create a new Blood Pool within his own body only as long as there is some blood already in the system. Roll against a difficulty of 6. The number of successes determines how many Blood Points are created. Fresh blood is required before this power can be used again.

••••• Potent manipulations of blood are possible, including a rumored attack called Cauldron of Blood which boils the blood within a target to cause great physical harm and destroy the blood. The difficulty of this attack is the number of Blood Points the Vampire wishes to boil at once. That is also the maximum number of points that may be destroyed. Mortals are usually killed by this attack.

The Lure of Flames: The character can create flames. Only small ones are possible at low levels of ability, but larger and hotter flames burn at the command of those proficient at Thaumaturgy. The character can create the flame anywhere within line of sight, but must roll Dexterity + Alertness to properly place it unless it is upon their own body. The flame created by this Form is not natural and cannot burn objects until it has been released by the Kindred. Therefore, a "palm of flame" will not burn the Vampire's hand and create an Aggravated Wound — it will only produce light. Additionally, if the Thaumaturgist ignites his own body, those grappling with him will not suffer.

•	Candle
••	Palm of flame
•••	Camp fire
••••	Bon-fire
•••••	Conflagration

Movement of Mind: This is the Form of the mental control of objects' motions. Objects may be lifted, moved, spun in circles, or whatever. If this Form is practiced on a living creature, the subject can attempt to resist. Objects cannot be moved faster than the character can move himself, so objects cannot be "thrown" with any great ability. However, objects may be manipulated as if by the Vampire's own hands. Axes can chop at people or trees, and guns may be fired, in each case assuming that the Kindred is advanced enough to lift the object.

The weight of the object moved is very important, for you need to have a certain rating in order to even attempt to move certain weight objects. Once Vampires achieve rating 3, they are able to levitate themselves, no matter how much they weigh. Otherwise, weight restrictions apply.

•	1 pound
••	20 pounds
•••	200 pounds
••••	500 pounds
•••••	1/2 ton

Weather Control: This Form allows a character to affect the weather. The difficulty of the magic depends on the weather at the time. It is very hard (difficulty 9) to pull lightning down from a sunny sky, but it's easy to create fog in London (difficulty 3).

A player must roll Manipulation + Survival. The number of successes determines the strength of the new environmental force and how much damage is caused by the lightning bolt (mortals cannot resist lightning damage and Kindred may only use Fortitude, since it is aggravated damage).

•	Fog
••	Rain
•••	Wind
••••	Storm
•••••	Lightning Strike (Roll 10 damage dice, 6 difficulty)

Background

It was many years ago that I became what I am.
I was trapped in this life like an innocent lamb.
Now I can never show my face at noon
And you'll only see me walking by the light of the moon.
The brim of my hat hides the eye of a beast
I've the face of a sinner, but the hands of a priest.

— Sting, *Moon over Bourbon Street*

This Trait describes the special advantages of your character. However, you must choose how and why you have this particular Trait. Where did you get your Resources? What kind of Contacts do you have? Where does all of this Influence come from? Make sense out of your Background Traits and integrate them into your character concept.

Rolls can be made using these Traits to see if a certain type of information is gotten, resource obtained or favor given. Frequently, these Background Traits are used in tandem with an Attribute, such as Charisma + Influence, to get the police not to arrest you, or Wits + Resources to get your parents to write just one last check (as a loan, of course).

Allies: Your Allies are mortals who will help and support you — they could be family or friends, or even an organization to which you are friendly. Allies have their own lives to live, so they are not at your beck and call, but they often have Influence in the community and access to Contacts or Resources. An Ally is ultimately a mortal who you have befriended, and who protects and aids you out of love or out of common interest.

For each point of Allies that you have, consider yourself to have one Ally. This individual is a person of influence in the city where they live. An Ally could be a Police Sergeant, an Advisor to the Mayor, or even (if your rating is a 4 or 5) the Mayor herself.

Allies are generally very trustworthy and loyal. However, it requires time and energy to maintain the alliance, for the friend expects the aid of the character in return in time of need. Though they likely do not know that you are a Vampire, they may know of some of your powers and thus may come to you for favors. This is often a means by which a story can begin.

- • One Ally, of moderate influence and power.
- •• Two Allies, both of them of moderate power.
- ••• Three Allies, one of them quite influential.
- •••• Four Allies, one of them very influential.
- ••••• Five Allies, one of them extremely influential.

Contacts: You know people from many different walks of life, and they comprise a system of information and help that could come in very handy some day.

Your Contacts are not only the people you can manipulate or bribe to get information, but friends who you can really count on (Major Contacts) to provide you with accurate information (in the areas they know anything about). You should describe your Major Contacts as complete characters, either as the Chronicle progresses or before hand. You also have a number of Minor Contacts spread through the city. When you wish to get in touch with a Minor Contact, you make a roll using your Contacts rating with a difficulty of 7. Each success means you have made successful contact with one of your Minor Contacts. You will need to bribe or charm them into giving you the information.

- • One Major Contact
- •• Two Major Contacts
- ••• Three Major Contacts
- •••• Four Major Contacts
- ••••• Five Major Contacts

He senses something, someone. From behind his curtains, he scans the yard, but sees no one in the soft light of the moon.

Fame: You are widely known among the mortals, perhaps you are a movie star or a famous writer. This gives you great privileges when you travel or go out among the mortals, but it can also attract just a bit too much attention. Fame can grant a lot of pull in the mass media, allowing you to attempt to manipulate the thoughts of the populace.

Sometimes Fame can seem like more trouble than it is worth, causing you to be recognized when you don't wish to be seen. However, there are many circumstances where it can come in handy, like getting you into clubs, parties and appointments that you otherwise would not have been able to get. Sometimes Fame will be used with Manipulation in order to make a roll ("see if you can convince the doorman to let you in, difficulty of 8"), but more often it is simply used as a measure of how well-known the character is.

- • Known by a select sub group of society in the city, e.g among the elite.
- •• Face recognized by a majority of the populace, local celebrity.
- ••• You are fairly famous, and your name and face are known by many.
- •••• You are quite renowned and everybody knows something about you.
- ••••• Major Star/Politician/Performer. You are a nationally famous individual. Your face appears regularly on magazine covers and T.V.

Generation: This Trait describes what Generation of Vampire you are. This is crucial in determining the ultimate potential of the character. If you do not take Generation, you begin as a Vampire of the thirteenth Generation. See the Setting chapter, page 184, for more information on Generations.

- • Twelfth Generation
- •• Eleventh Generation
- ••• Tenth Generation
- •••• Ninth Generation
- ••••• Eighth Generation

Herd: Many Vampires build a group of mortals, from whom they can feed without fear. This Herd also helps protect the Vampire and can be used by the Kindred to perform a number of different services. However, the Herd is not as tightly controlled as Retainers, and are not as closely connected to the character as are Allies. Ultimately, the Herd describes only the number of Vessels you have readily available. Your Herd rating is added to your Hunt rolls, as described in the Drama chapter (page 144).

- • 3 Vessels
- •• 7 Vessels
- ••• 15 Vessels
- •••• 30 Vessels
- ••••• 60 Vessels

Influence: Influence reflects your capacity to produce results when attempting to sway or control the political and social processes of the mortal community. It describes the ability to compel a mortal to take action on your behalf, perhaps because of some hold you have over them. This could mean that you have a prestigious family, control the police chief, or simply that you have gained political office. In short, Influence is how much political power you exert upon society, particularly among the police and bureaucrats.

Some rolls might use Influence in place of an Ability, especially when you start to interact with any sort of minor bureaucrat.

- • Moderately influential; a factor in local politics.
- •• Well connected with power; a factor in city politics.
- ••• Position of influence; a factor in state politics.
- •••• Broad personal power; a factor in regional politics.
- ••••• Vastly influential; a factor in national politics.

Mentor: Describes one or more Elders (your Sire?) who look after you. Each rating point of Mentor which you possess describes how powerful your Mentor is in the community of the Kindred. Your Mentor could simply be a Vampire who has learned their way around the city, or an Ancient who has garnered huge amounts of power, both in the mortal and immortal worlds. Your Mentor can give you advice, protect you from other Elders, speak for you to the Prince, caution you when you intrude on the affairs of other Elders, and tell you of opportunities for power and advancement.

Often a Mentor is the Sire of the character, though it can be any Vampire who has taken interest in that individual. If your Mentor is powerful, it might not be a single person, but a group. Thus, a Brood could be a Mentor, as could the ruling council of a Clan. Tremere often have the Mentor Background Trait, because of the aid they receive from their Elders.

Mentors may expect to receive something in return for the aid they provide. Though they may simply enjoy the company of the character, in times of need, they may call upon their "apprentice." Thus may begin a number of excellent stories. In general however, the character does receive more than she needs to give out.

- • Mentor is an Ancilla, little power.
- •• Mentor is an Elder and is well respected.
- ••• Mentor is the Prince and has much power over the city.
- •••• Mentor is a Justicar or a member of the Primogen.
- ••••• Mentor is a Methuselah and is extraordinarily powerful.

Resources: This describes the financial resources of your character, at least before he was infected with Vampirism. You do not have very much money to spend however, just a modest per diem to maintain your current living standard.

Your Resources are not completely liquid assets, but you can often sell them to gain money, but it could take a number of weeks or months depending on how much needed to be sold.

Resources assume that the character gains a basic allowance each month, appropriate to the level of Resources. However, the player must detail the source of this income, as it might well "dry up" depending on the circumstances of the Chronicle.

- • Small savings: You have an apartment and perhaps a motorcycle. If liquidated, you would have $1000 in cash. Allowance of $500 a month.
- •• Middle class: You have an apartment or condominium. If liquidated, you would have $8,000 in cash. Allowance of $ 1200 a month.
- ••• Large savings: You own a house (or at least have some equity). If liquidated, you would have $50,000 in cash. Allowance of $3000 a month.
- •••• You are well off, so you don't have to worry about money: You own a very large house, or perhaps a dilapidated mansion. If liquidated, you would have $500,000 in cash. Allowance of $9000 a month.
- ••••• Fantastically rich, you are easily a millionaire many times over. If liquidated you would have at least $5,000,000 in cash. Allowance of $30,000 a month.

Retainers: You have a number of servants or other bonded individuals who are your loyal and steadfast companions. They may be either Ghouls who are Blood Bound to you, individuals who you have so Dominated over the years that they are incapable of independent action, or people who you have so overwhelmed with your presence that they would do anything for you.

A Retainer must always be controlled in some way, either through a salary, through the donation of your Blood, or through the direct control of their mind. They may not always be loyal, though they usually are strongly so. If given the chance, they may betray their master, depending on how well they have been treated.

Retainers should not be supermen, even if they are Ghouls. Each should have a weakness. For instance, the Retainer might be very loyal, but not very skilled. Or the Retainer might be powerful, but have a very independent mind. Do not allow your players to make all their Retainers into the perfect bodyguard. Retainers are meant to be characters, to add flavor to the Chronicle. Don't let let them be abused.

- • One Retainer.
- •• Two Retainers.
- ••• Three Retainers.
- •••• Four Retainers.
- ••••• Five Retainers.

+ You have something of a reputation and a Status within the community of Kindred (which in the character's case almost always means the Camarilla). The more Status you have, the less ill treated you are by the Elders, and the more respected you become. Anarchs can be considered to have zero Status, unless they have garnered so much power and attention that they must be treated seriously. Status is sometimes used in rolls with Social Traits and reflects the prestige of the character in such instances. It is very important during meetings of the Camarilla.

- • Known.
- •• Respected.
- ••• High Status.
- •••• Powerful.
- ••••• Luminary. Perhaps even a Prince.

Virtues

Only the free have disposition to be truthful,
Only the truthful have the interest to be just,
Only the just possess the will-power to be free.

— W.H. Auden, *In Time of War, Commentary*

These are three aspects of a character which describe their orientation on life and their essential morality. These Virtues are used to help roleplayers understand and direct their characters, not force a certain action upon them. However, in certain rolls, a failure may indicate that the character is not restrained enough to avoid going into a Frenzy, not moral enough to avoid losing Humanity, or not brave enough to remain in a dangerous situation.

Conscience: You are tolerant and merciful of heart, even to those who have harmed or betrayed you. You find it hard to hold a grudge and make every effort to forgive those who have injured or betrayed you. Conscience is a Trait of self-awareness that enables a character to evaluate their own conduct. The judgments made by the Conscience stem from attitudes, ideals and morals of the character. They are internalized prescriptions of self-worth and the voice of the real self — not the facade the character might present to the world.

- • Tolerant.
- •• Clement.
- ••• Lenient.
- •••• Charitable.
- ••••• Forgiving.

Self-Control: You are a person of great temperance and self mastery. You have the discipline and the self-restraint to prevent yourself from doing things that your impulses would otherwise have you do. It is a control over one's feelings, emotions and most importantly, actions.

You use your Self-Control to resist going into a Frenzy. When you use Self-Control, you can never roll more dice than you currently have as a rating in your Blood Pool. Quite simply, the hungrier you are, the less easily can you resist.

- • Calm.
- •• Temperate.
- ••• Disciplined.
- •••• Hardened.
- ••••• You are the "Iceman."

Courage: You are a person of bravery, tenacity and considerable perseverance. Courage is a quality of the mind that enables one to stand up in the face of opposition, hardship or danger.

You use your Courage to resist running away in terror from things a Vampire instinctively shies away from — such as the sun, fire or a cross held by a person with holy powers. Courage also is used to determine whether a character has the tenacity to stay awake during the day and continue to function during the daylight hours.

- • Bold.
- •• Dauntless.
- ••• Steadfast.
- •••• Gallant.
- ••••• Valorous.

Humanity

Maybe there's no haven in this world for tender age
My heart beat like the wings of wild birds in a cage
My greatest hope my greatest cause to grieve
And my heart flew from its cage and it bled upon my sleeve
The cries of passion were like wounds that needed healing
I couldn't hear them for the thunder.
I was half the naked distance
between hell and heaven's ceiling
And he almost pulled me under.

— Indigo Girls, *Prince of Darkness*

Humanity is a measure of how much of one's mortal nature remains in a character despite the curse of Vampirism. Humanity influences how well a character is able to resist all their newly unearthed urges and instincts. The most important Trait your character can have is Humanity, for as it drops, so does the character's connection to her human nature. A character with no rating in Humanity becomes a totally inhuman monster and is no longer under the control of the player. A new character must be created if the player wishes to continue playing. There are no exceptions to this rule.

This is the basic reason why you want to preserve your Humanity, but there are many others. For instance, you cannot roll more dice in any Empathy roll than you have as a Humanity score. The less Humanity you have, the deeper you sleep, and the more difficult it is for you to wake up in an emergency. You also tend to go into a Frenzy more often in stressful situations, as you find it difficult to control your primal instincts when you are in danger. The actions you take when in Frenzy could lead you to lose even more Humanity.

This Trait can be seen as what separates a Vampire from a human. Vampires with high Humanity are the most human, while those with low Humanity are brutal and monstrous. Of course, it's not as clean cut as that, as many humans have a low Humanity — sadistic killers for example — so it's possible for a Vampire to be even more human than some humans.

x	Monstrous
•	Horrific
••	Bestial
•••	Cold
••••	Unfeeling
•••••	Distant
••••••	Removed
•••••••	Normal
••••••••	Feeling
•••••••••	Compassionate
••••••••••	Humane

Using Humanity

• To a large extent, Humanity determines how human the Vampire appears and how easily they can pass for human in the general populace. The less Humanity a character possesses, the more bestial they appear. When interacting with mortals, no roll involving social interaction (Social Attributes) can be made with more dice than the character has Humanity. Thus if you had only four Humanity, you could roll a maximum of only four dice when you attempt to bribe the Police Inspector. However, this does not apply to Social rolls that involve fear or intimidation.

• Vampires tend to sleep very deeply, and even if there is danger, it can be difficult to wake up. During the prime hours of the day, especially after being awakened, you cannot roll more dice on *any roll* for *any action* than you have Humanity. See the Awakenings section of the Drama chapter for more information on how Humanity affects activities during the day (page 143).

• Humanity directly affects your Virtue rolls when you attempt to resist going into Frenzy. You cannot roll more

dice that you have Humanity. Therefore, as you sink into the abyss of bestiality, you can not long resist the call of the wild. As you lose Humanity, you come slowly closer to the day when you lose all self control.

• The length of time you spend in Torpor is also directly affected by your Humanity rating (see page 119). The lower your Humanity, the longer you remain in Torpor.

Willpower

The need comes upon me, a wash of lust and craving which I cannot resist. Like a tree against the storm, I do not bend but eventually I will break. I may wait, contain my desire for week upon week, allowing the agony to mount, but eventually I can resist no more and I must kill again....

— Thomas Braundenburg, *Soul Whisper*

Willpower is also an important Trait, for it measures how capable characters are at overcoming the urges and desires that may tempt them. However, unlike other Traits, it is not something you roll (at least not often). Willpower is something that you use up. When you use a point of Willpower, you use it from your Willpower Pool (the squares) not from your Willpower rating (the circles). The rating stays constant, while the Pool gets used up during the story.

•	Weak
••	Timid
•••	Unassertive
••••	Diffident
•••••	Certain
••••••	Confident
•••••••	Strong
••••••••	Controlled
•••••••••	Iron-willed
••••••••••	Unshakable

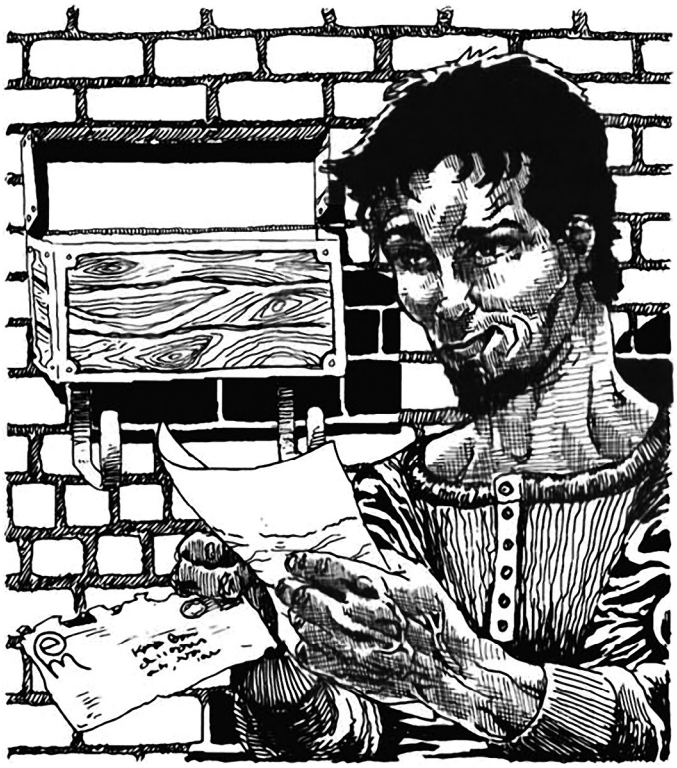
Using Willpower

Willpower is one of the most active Traits in **Vampire**, simply because there are so many different ways to employ, regain and change it. Willpower is such a focus of the game that you will be paying a lot of attention to it, so you had better understand the following rules.

• A Willpower point can be used to give you one automatic success in an action. Only one Willpower can be used on a single turn, but it gives you a single guaranteed success. In this fashion, it is possible to succeed automatically in any simple action simply by concentrating. For extended rolls, the extra success can make the critical difference between success and failure. There are some situations in which the Storyteller may not allow you to make such a use of Willpower. Only Vampires may use Willpower in this way.

• On some occasions, the Storyteller may tell you that your character does something because of instinct, primal urge or gut reaction ("You run away from the window in mortal terror as the sunlight streams through."). You can use a point of Willpower to avoid this so you can do as you please. However, the feeling might return and another Willpower point might be required. Sometimes it will return more times than you have Willpower, while other times you may completely overcome the urge.

• When one of your Derangements is about to cause you to take a course of action you do not prefer, a Willpower point can be used to control yourself. However, each new attempted action away from the dictates of the Derangement requires another use of a Willpower point. Eventually, however, if enough Willpower points are spent, the Derangement is overcome permanently. This is the only way Derangements can be overcome, though this is not effective on a Malkavian's initial Derangement.



Kyle receives an invitation to a private screening of the "lost piece" of Michelangelo.

Blood Pool

Why do your locks and rumpled clothes show
Tis more than usual sleep has made them so?
Why are the kisses which he gave betrayed
By the impression which his teeth have made?

— Ovid

This is simply a measure of how much blood a Vampire has in its system. The Blood Pool can be empty, which simply means that the character has used up all available blood in their body system. Vampires will then lose body levels the next time the rules require them to lose a Blood Pool (such as when a night passes). In other words, when the Blood Pool is empty, the character may not make use of Blood Points.

Blood Pool is important for all Self-Control rolls. You may never roll more dice on a roll using the Self-Control Trait than you currently have as a rating in your Blood Pool. Thus if you only have three Blood Points left, you can only roll three dice to avoid going into Frenzy, even if your Self-Control is four. This reflects the negative influence hunger has on Self-Control.

Some Elders of earlier Generations will have Blood Pools larger than ten Blood Points. If a character ever gains the ability to have more than ten Blood Points, simply have her draw in dots in pen below the dots already shown.

Using Blood Pool

Every day of existence uses up one Blood Point (you scratch it off after a day of sleep). However, characters can decide to use up Blood Points for other purposes. The number of Blood Points you can use per turn is determined by your Generation (see page 185), though the effect is cumulative over a number of turns.

• One Blood Point spent can restore one Health Level, but only if the character is at rest and is not active. It takes one turn to heal one Health Level. See the Development chapter, page 119, for more information.

• One Blood Point can add one die to any action related to the use of a specific Physical Attribute (actions requiring Strength, Dexterity or Stamina). Before the action is made, the player must announce they have used a Blood Pool point, and for the remainder of the scene, they gain one extra die. Only one Blood Point can be used per turn, but the effects accumulate over a number of turns as more Blood Points are used. After three turns and three blood points, a character could have +2 Strength and +1 Dexterity.

• You can give a portion of your Blood Pool to another player, to help her restore Health Levels or take special actions. This necessitates the slashing open of an artery, and drinking the Blood from it. Some characters may Frenzy and attempt to drink more than they should from you, so this action can be somewhat dangerous. Additionally, if this is the third time someone has drunk your blood, they will become Blood Bound to you, unless you are already currently Blood Bound to another Vampire.

Health

And he that will this health deny,
Down among the dead men let him lie.

— John Dyer, *Toast: Here's a Health to the King*

This is a measure of how hale and hearty a character is. There are various levels of wounds, and each applies a different penalty to the person so injured. A character who is Hurt, -1, would have one less die to roll on all their rolls, while a character who is Crippled, -5, would have five less dice to roll. If that leaves the player with no dice to roll, then they cannot take that action.

Health Levels

Bruised	Character is only bruised and has no action penalties.
Hurt:	Character is only mildly hurt, movement isn't hindered.
Injured:	A small injury, little hindrance to movement.
Wounded	Character cannot run, but can only walk.
Mauled:	Character is badly injured and can only hobble about.
Crippled:	Character is severely injured and can only crawl.
Incapacitated:	Character is completely incapable of movement.

Vampires who are Incapacitated can take no action whatsoever. They are immobilized and the only action they can perform is to heal themselves using Blood Points or swallow blood that is offered to them. Mortals who have reached this state are very close to death; if they lose one more Health Level, then they are dead. If a Vampire sustains an aggravated wound at this Incapacitated, then they must face the Final Death as well.

Swift to its close ebbs out life's little day;
Earth's joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
Change and decay in all around I see;
O Thou, who changest not, abide with me.

— H.F. Lyte, *Abide With Me*

Monsters, Monsters Everywhere

They crowd our imagination. They lurk within the dark recesses of our primal unconsciousness. They hide under our beds. Can't run, can't hide. It's going to get you. The beast, the ravager, the *Lusus Naturæ*. What is it, and why do we fear it?

What is its name?

Always we have had our Fiends. They have long fired the romantic imagination of both poet and priest alike. At one time, long ago, we called them Trolls, later they were Demons, then they were Witches who brewed evil potions. Still later, the Monster was said to be the hungry Wolf, the Bogeyman, or Godzilla. Finally, some called it human ignorance and intolerance. For a time, they tried to tell us that Monsters don't exist at all, that everything about the universe was either known or soon would be.

But now we know better. We have made our reacquaintance with the Beast; We have learned its true name.

Now we know of the expanse of eternity, its unimaginable infinitude, the chaos of its structure, and our own petty insignificance. Now we have admitted the magnitude of the problems we face and of out inability to affect change on the scale necessary to save us. We have admitted our own essential frailty in the face of eternity.

We have caught a glimpse of reality, and have seen truth behind the veil. Today, we have come full circle and rediscovered the Fiend. We have regained our ancient heritage. We have seen that to which we have given so many names — the source of our mortal terror.

We have found the enemy... and it is us.

Humans are searchers, forever looking for the uncomfortable truth of their human condition. We search within ourselves for that which is unclean, uncertain or impure — for that which has no name. By looking at the Monsters we create, we gain new insight into our "darker half." These fiends express what we are at the deepest and most inaccessible levels of our consciousness. Since time immortal, these creatures have given us a connection to our animal self, the fulfillment of an unadulterated emotional vitality, and the promise of a brutal justice.

The Vampire is the quintessential fiend, for the Vampire is so much our own reflection. Vampires feed as we feed, by killing, and through death can feel the same dread, guilt and longing for escape. They are trapped in the same cycle of fast, feast and purge. They, like us, seek redemption, purity and peace. They are the poetic expressions of our deepest fears, and the shadows of our primal urges.

Just as the hero of legend must descend into the pit of Purgatory to face his tormentor, to overcome his personal weaknesses, and finally to be cleansed in order to return home with the gift of fire, so must we descend into the depths of our own mind in order to learn what is really there and to return to life with the secrets we have won. That is the real journey of Prometheus. It is the meaning of the myth. By embarking on such a journey, we can discover ourselves, we can look into the mirror.

The allure of this promise of spiritual connectivity is irresistible. But in the end, it is a most disturbing undertaking. You must take heed and step carefully — for no journey is ever without its perils. Do not look into your soul, unless you are truly willing to face what you find there.

So Remember:

There are no such things as Monsters...

Malkavian (mal'-kä - vē - än)

Chapter Five: Development

Nothing determines who we will become, so much as those things we choose to ignore.

— Sandor McNab

This chapter describes all the different ways a character can change during the course of the Chronicle. To a lesser degree, it also discusses the different things a character can do during the Chronicle. Though divided into a number of autonomous sections, this chapter is united by the way it focuses on how, why and when changes occur in a character.

One of the most exciting things about playing characters is seeing them change over time. Watching them develop and grow is like watching a child grow up before your eyes. However, in **Vampire**, development doesn't always mean the character gets better. Oftentimes it means the character is slowly and steadily sinking into the abyss. Such is the nature of this game. Focus on getting better and surviving the rough periods, and try to appreciate the artistic impact of losing your Humanity or your mind.

Experience

Experience is the child of Thought, and Thought is the child of Action.

— Benjamin Disraeli, *Vivian Grey*

We mortals are learning machines, and we learn constantly — almost despite ourselves. By learning not only fact and figures, but new ways of being, we can make ourselves into what we want to be. Vampires do not find it as easy to learn, for the inertia of their deaths is hard to reverse, but their long lives allow them to accumulate a vast treasury of knowledge and lore. As the years begin to fly by, it becomes more and more difficult for them to continue to add to their knowledge, yet they do learn. The Elders are dangerous, not only because of their heightened powers, but also because of their wisdom and hard-earned knowledge.

During a story, each character learns many things. Much of what they learn is not the type of thing you record on a character sheet, but rather something the player simply keeps in mind. They may have learned never to leave a car door unlocked or never to walk into a dark alley with a light behind you. Sometimes, however, what they learn can be recorded, and described below is a system for doing so.

At the end of every story, you will award experience points to each player, normally giving the same amount to every player. The players then simply record how many experience points they gained, or they can immediately "spend them." The cost for raising Traits varies widely. See the chart below for specifics. The cost is almost always based on the present rating times a certain number (yes, you have to do multiplication). Thus if you had an Alertness rating of two and wanted to raise it to three, it would cost four experience

Changes

There are a number of different things which can change on a **Vampire** character sheet. Below is a list of these things and the section of this chapter where you can find information on it.

What can Change	Section of Chapter
Abilities	Experience
Attributes	Experience
Disciplines	Experience
Willpower	Experience
Motivations	Personality
Demeanor	Personality
Nature	Personality
Backgrounds	Personality
Willpower Pool	Willpower
Blood Pool	Blood
Humanity	Humanity
Personality	Derangement
Sanity	Derangement

points to do so. If the character does not have the Trait at all, the cost is listed as "new" Ability or Discipline. The level of a Trait can only be raised by one level per story, never more.

Type of Trait	Cost
New Ability	3
New Discipline	7
Willpower	current rating
Virtue	current rating
Ability	current rating × 2
Clan Discipline	current rating × 3
Attribute	current rating × 4
Other Disciplines	current rating × 5

Notes: Characters with no Clan, Caitiffs, have no Clan Disciplines. For them, all Disciplines cost the current rating × 4 in experience points in order for them to raise a Discipline by one. This is due to their lack of specialization.

When the Virtues are increased through using experience, Humanity or Willpower do not go up as well along with them. Once the Chronicle starts, they are considered separate Traits (though, of course, one Virtue point must be deleted each time a Humanity point is lost).

Roleplay It

You should not let the players simply spend their experience points to raise any Trait they wish — it's a little more involved than that. The Trait they are attempting to increase must be something they had a chance to learn about during the story. Either the character achieved great success through using that Trait, or made a big mistake that they can learn from. In the case of Willpower, something must have occurred which can help them increase their Willpower.

You should only allow the changes if they have been or can be woven into the story. At the very least, the changes need to make sense in terms of the story, not simply be changes the player makes because they want their character to be a certain way. This experience system can be as realistic as you make it. The more you force the players to make sense of their experience, the more it will add to character development as a whole.

Awarding Experience Points

The players will love you for it, and they will hate you as well. Assigning experience points must always be a careful balance between rewarding the players and maintaining game balance. If you follow the guidelines below, you probably won't get into too much trouble, so go beyond these rules at your own risk.

Give each character 1-3 experience points at the end of every chapter (game session). One point is given whether or not they succeed or fail, as a function of simply being there (remember, we learn despite ourselves sometimes).

End of Game Session

1 point — Automatic: Players get 1 point after every game session.

1 point — Educational Experience: The character would have learned something from their experiences during the Chapter. Ask the player to describe what their character learned before you award them the point.

1 point — Roleplaying: The player roleplayed well. Not only entertainingly but appropriately. Award for exceptional roleplaying only, your standards should get increasingly higher. In most cases, only award this to the person who did the best roleplaying in the Troupe.

At the end of each story, you can assign each player up to 1-3 *additional* experience points. This is on top of the 1-3 points they get for completing the final chapter. See the list below:

End of Story

1 point — Success: The characters succeeded in their mission or goal. Perhaps it was not a complete success, but at least a marginal victory was achieved.

1 point — Danger: The Character experienced great danger during the story and survived.

1 point — Wisdom: The player (and thus the character) exhibited great wits or resources and came up with an idea that enabled the story to result as a success.

If you want to award even more points so that the characters will develop more quickly, simply invent new categories in which you can make awards. They can even vary from story to story, and be based on the specific circumstances of that story.

Raising Disciplines

Disciplines are probably the most difficult aspect of a character for a player to develop, though it is certainly a high priority if the character wishes to indeed live forever — only Vampiric power provides real and continuous safety.

Though characters can gain Disciplines simply by spending experience points, the Storyteller may want to restrict it somewhat more. For instance, if a character wished to learn a new Discipline in which they have no current rating, they may have to search out a tutor or discover a magical amulet which awakens their latent Discipline. They can't simply pick it up, they must first be taught the basics. However this works is up to the Storyteller, and unless the Storyteller says otherwise, players can simply use experience points to purchase Disciplines.

Beyond simply the Disciplines already described in the Traits chapter, there are other more specialized powers which are possessed by Elders. These can either be invented by the Storyteller or you can find them in the supplements to this game. It is possible for characters to gain these new Disciplines, but it takes extraordinary measures to do so — sometimes even requiring the Blood of an Elder.

Backgrounds

Background Traits can never be changed through the use of experience points. Rather, the change happens as a normal course of events during the Chronicle. Eventually, it will be duly noted by the Storyteller and changes will be accorded to you. You may wish to ask the Storyteller if one of your Background Traits should be changed, but be careful you do not do so too often. The Storyteller may design a list of things you must accomplish in order to gain in a Trait — you may or may not be shown the list. To raise a Trait like Retainers, you may have to find the right subject, befriend or Dominate them, and train them in the duties you wish them to perform. Finding the right subject could be very difficult, requiring the player to describe what places she searches and how she does so.

Personality

Be all that you can be, The greatest challenge of them all ... Yourself.

— Advertisement

Personality can change over the course of the Chronicle, but for the most part this is something that is roleplayed, not simply changed on the character sheet. For instance, as time passes, character motivations change as well. Deciding when and portraying how your character's motivations change can add a great depth to your roleplaying. However, when a character's Demeanor or true Nature changes, it should be recorded on the character sheet as well. No aspect of personality can ever be changed through the use of experience points.

Demeanor

Though the Demeanor listed on the character sheet is simply the way the character most commonly presents themselves, it is not an absolute standard of behavior. Changing the Demeanor of a character may help the player to focus on the change in their personality. A player may change his character's Demeanor at any point in the game, but should either tell the Storyteller that he has done so or make it evident through his roleplaying that there has been some change.

Sometimes the Storyteller might suggest the change after watching the way the character is played, simply as a way of alerting the player that she has noticed the change in personality. Keep in mind that it really isn't all that important. Demeanor is only a tool that the player uses to focus and direct roleplaying. If a change in Demeanor is called for or seems appropriate, go right ahead and change it.

It is a very private screening, but his excitement to see the piece precludes any discretion.

Nature

A player may also change their character's Nature, but rules for this are somewhat more restrictive than for changing Demeanor. A character's Nature is central to who and what they are — it is the locus of their being. A change in Nature is akin to a change in personality — everything is different after it occurs. It should not be decided on the spur of the moment, but must be thoroughly considered. As the Storyteller forces a player to roleplay out the change over a number of game sessions, a story might even be created around this tumultuous transformation. Conversely, sometimes it may simply make sense that the change in personality came about suddenly, as a reaction to what has occurred to them or around them. Though it is certainly up to your discretion, a change in Nature sometimes results in a reshuffling of Virtues, though never a change in the rating of a character's Humanity.

Willpower

I think of isolation and abstinence, and how each is so cruelly dependent upon the other. There are times I cannot stand to resist any longer, yet when I do feed, I cannot abide the sight of the blood that is upon my hands.

— Tamalary, *Personal Recollections*

Willpower can only be permanently increased by the expenditure of experience points, but the Willpower Pool can go through enormous changes during a story. Discussed below are all the different ways Willpower can change.

Temporary Changes

Willpower from the Willpower Pool (recorded in the square boxes on the character sheet) will go up and down a great deal during a story. It decreases by one every time the player uses a Willpower point to do something extraordinary, such as to retain self-control or gain an automatic success. Eventually, the player will have no Willpower and will no longer be able to exert himself the way he once did. The character is mentally exhausted and can't rouse himself enough to give a damn — they've expended all their Willpower.

Players recover their Willpower Pool whenever they are able to rest or get a chance to restore their self-confidence. It is up to the Storyteller to decide when and how a character recovers their Willpower, but you should always be frugal. It is best for characters to always be low on Willpower, so players are always worried about not having enough — it adds to the suspense.

After particularly bitter defeats, you will probably want to make the player go to special lengths to recover Willpower. There are a number of means to this end — journey into the wilderness, apologize to the person you have wronged, or defeat an opponent who has humbled you. It all depends on the circumstances and your whim.

Sometimes, because of a mental illness the character has contracted, they will be unable to regain their Willpower until they take a specific action or accomplish a specific aim, such as drinking the blood of a willing virgin or succeeding in vanquishing a Vampire Prince.

Recovering Willpower

Below are listed the three different ways in which a character can regain Willpower. This does not have anything to do with the Willpower rating (which can be changed only with experience).

• At the end of the story (not a game session), all the characters regain their Willpower — all of it is recovered up to the amount of the Willpower rating. You may wish to simulate this by saying that the characters needed to retain some modicum of self-pride or were somewhat successful. *e.g. The story ends with a partial stalemate. You didn't get everything you were after, but enough to feel somewhat satisfied. Recover all your Willpower.*

• (Optional) Achieve some special success during the story that the Storyteller judges would cause the character to recover her self-confidence (and thus all or some of her Willpower). *e.g. You rescue your father from the Sabbat, just before he was to receive the Embrace. Regain three Willpower points.*

• (Optional) Fulfill some criteria of the character's chosen Archetype, thus regaining from 1 to 3 Willpower as suggested for each Archetype. This must be approved by the Storyteller and achieved through roleplaying. *e.g. As a Conniver, you manage to trick the bartender into giving you the key to his car. Regain two Willpower for that scam.*

If none of the options above suit your style of play, consider allowing the characters to regain one point of Willpower after they wake up each evening. It's a simple way to organize it because they are already subtracting a point from the Blood Pool, and it guarantees a steady recovery of Willpower.

Gaining Willpower Permanently

Permanent Willpower can of course be gained through the use of experience points, but sometimes you may give a player a specific chance to raise their Willpower. You can use the gaining of Willpower as a great motivation for a story, especially for your more bizarre story ideas.

Such plots are very appropriate to storytelling, for they delve into real human motivations, needs and desires. Believe it or not, it can be more realistic to have the characters pursue some ephemeral goal, like the quest to recover their self-pride (Willpower), than to scavenge after money or power.

Losing Willpower Permanently

Willpower can be permanently lost as well. This occurs whenever a player rolls a botch while making a Willpower roll. One point is lost for every botch that is rolled. Luckily, this occurs only rarely, for Willpower is rolled only during Frenzies, when employing the dangerous forces of Thaumaturgy, and in order to resist Domination.

Blood Pool

Oh I miss the kiss of treachery
The aching kiss before
I feed the stench of a love
For a younger meat and
The sound that it makes when
It cuts in deep.

— The Cure, *Disintegration*

When a character drinks the blood of an animal or human, they gain nourishment — the blood essential for a Vampire to live. This is described in the game as Blood Pool points. If a character has ten Blood Pool points, they are full and cannot drink any more. If you drink all of a person's blood, they will die. If you drink more than half of it, they will need to be hospitalized and will perhaps die (mortals drop one Health Level for every point of blood lost). If characters do not want to risk losing Humanity, they'd better learn to control themselves.

Gaining Blood Pool

When a Vampire drinks the blood of a human or an animal, they are able to add blood to their own Blood Pool. Up to three points of blood can be drained in one turn. The shorter the turn, the less leisurely the character is taking the sustenance. Many Kindred drink very slowly so as to eke more pleasure out of the experience. It is impossible to take more than three points of blood in three seconds (the shortest an action turn gets).

Once a human is bitten, they no longer resist the attack of the Vampire and indeed become a full partner in the ecstasy that is felt. Thus, the Vampire does not fear the victim once their teeth have sunk in. In the cases of exceptionally strong-willed individuals (9+ Willpower), resistance may continue, but eventually they too are drawn into the seduction of the Kiss. Some mortals, given the opportunity, learn to enjoy the Embrace and may develop a lust for it.

If a Vampire drinks more than half of the Blood Pool of a victim, then they put that person's life into serious danger, and some sort of treatment is usually necessary to ensure the victim's survival. If more than three-fourths of a victim's blood

The painting seems to be an authentic Michelangelo. It is strange that he would paint a Babylonian palace.

is taken, then immediate hospitalization is required or else the Vessel will surely die.

When the characters are wounded, they usually have less blood than normal. Assume that a normal-sized human has one less Blood Point for every level of wounds. Vampires do not lose blood to wounds in this way. Assume that in general, humans regain one Blood Point a day if they do not have a full supply of blood.

While some animals may have much more blood than a human by volume, it is far less nourishing and therefore is worth less in Blood Points.

Old blood is never as potent as fresh blood, unless it was extraordinarily potent, e.g. the Blood of an Elder, in which case it will maintain its vitality for some time.

If a Vampire drinks the Blood of an Ancient, then each point they take may be worth two Blood Points or more. Therefore, it is possible by feeding from such creatures to gain a tremendous amount of Blood Points. Elders are able to concentrate the blood they drink, thereby increasing their effective Blood Pools. Each "point" of *their* Blood Pool is therefore worth up to 1/5th of their total Blood Pool.

Essentially, they have much larger Blood Pools than other Vampires, but they have the same size bodies. They are able to contain the Blood only because they are able to concentrate it. Thus, if another Vampire drank that Blood, they would receive a highly concentrated Blood. One can even tell how Ancient a Vampire is by tasting how concentrated their Blood is. The blood of Lupines is frequently just as valuable. See the section on Werewolves in the Setting chapter, page 192.

Source	Blood Pool size
Vampire	10 - 50
Average Human	10
Child	6
Cow	5
Dog	2
Cat	1
Rat	1/2
Bird	1/4

She cannot resist a touch, and from a touch to the Embrace.

Injury

Remember Doc, when the will is invoked, the recuperative powers of the human body are incredible.

— FBI Agent Cooper, *Twin Peaks*

There are many different ways a character can sustain an injury, but it is always recorded in the same manner. Characters record their injuries in terms of Health Levels, and each wound is considered a loss of one Health Level. Players simply check off their Health Levels as they lose them so the lowest check is the Health Level their character is presently at. As characters regain Health Levels, the player erases those check marks off.

Just think of it as a scale, and as you grow more wounded, you gain more checks, until you finally reach Incapacitated. When you heal up, you simply removed these checks one by one, until you have no Health Levels checked off.

Each success on an opponent's damage roll usually indicates a loss of one Health Level. For two successes you would check off two Health Levels, starting with Bruised and going down to Incapacitated. If Vampires take damage beyond simply being Incapacitated, they lose a Blood Point for each additional wound level. Once they have lost all of their Blood Points, they are completely helpless and will die with the rise of the sun unless somehow they are rescued. If he remains at incapacitated with no Blood Points, then he will fall into Torpor — an extremely deep sleep that can last years or even centuries. See the Torpor section below for more details.

Healing

Vampires never recover naturally from wounds, but must always use Blood Pool points to heal themselves. One Blood Point will heal one Health Level, and this always takes one turn to accomplish. Normally, the Vampire must remain still when healing, taking no other action, but they can attempt to heal while performing other actions. The character must make a Stamina + Fortitude roll to see if it was successful, the difficulty is an Eight, and a success indicates that you were able to heal yourself while engaged in other activities. A failure indicates not only that the Health Level was not regained, but that the Blood Point is still lost. A botch indicates that you actually lose another Health Level.

No more than one Health Level can be recovered in one turn, simply because no more than one Blood Point can be used per turn — though it is said that some Elders have the capacity to do otherwise.

Aggravated Wounds

Sometimes, Vampires are injured by something so serious they cannot simply use a Blood Point to heal it. This type of wound is called an aggravated wound and is usually from an injury created by sunlight, fire, or the claws or teeth of a Vampire. The Storyteller can also deem any injury to be an aggravated injury, depending on the circumstances. Aggravated wounds can only be healed at the rate of one wound level each day, and at the cost of three Blood Points and one Willpower point per wound level. Indicate Aggravated Wounds on your character sheet with an *X* rather than a *V*.

Final Death

Though Vampires are already dead, they can still face the Final Death, just as a mortal can. They are not easily harmed by concussion or mutilation, it does not necessarily mean that their undeath is perpetual. It is more a matter of different weaknesses. It may be tempting for you to pretend that you are a superman, capable of doing nearly anything and of withstanding nearly anything, but there is a way to kill even a Vampire.

Inflicting aggravated wounds on a severely injured Vampire is the most common way in which he can be "killed." If the Vampire has no Blood Pool or Health Levels and sustains an aggravated wound, then he is utterly destroyed. Most often the death will result in the complete and rapid disintegration of the body, and within minutes all that will be left is a pile of ashes.

Vampires can also be killed if all the blood is sucked from them by another of their kind. Deep water pressure, explosions, certain Vampiric diseases and decapitation are other ways the final death can be inflicted. You will need to decide how death can result from these dangers in your Chronicle, based on the rules given in this section.

Mortal Death

When a mortal reaches Incapacitated, they are one Health Level away from death. If they get injured one more time, or it is not possible to stem the flow of blood from their body, mortals will die. Death is final for mortals, unless of course they are Embraced just before they are snatched away to the everlasting. It is possible for a Vampire to take a newly dead corpse and turn them into a Vampire. However, not more than 5 minutes can have passed.

Torpor

As demonstrated above, death does not come easily to Vampires. However, when their injuries grow too great, they can go into a very deep sleep. This is known as Torpor. When a Vampire becomes injured beyond Incapacitated and loses all Blood Points as well, then the Vampire goes into Torpor. It is a type of sleep vastly deeper than the normal sleep of a Vampire. The character is completely immobilized and unconscious, though more powerful Kindred (such as the Antediluvians) can still use some of their Disciplines in this state.

Additionally, the character loses a rating point from a Physical Attribute once Torpor has been entered. The player must remove a point from one of the character's Physical Attributes as a penalty, there is no way for this loss to be avoided. Which Physical Trait will be decreased by one is up to the player.

Vampires with ten Humanity will come out of the deep sleep within a day or so, while those with less Humanity will sleep for a few weeks to a few months. It is said that the Antediluvians have been in Torpor for 2100 years. However, a Vampire does not simply come out of Torpor once the time has elapsed, new blood in their system is essential if they wish to come out of the deep sleep. Both criteria must be satisfied for the Torpor to come to an end. Refer to the chart below for the length of a Vampire's Torpor.

Humanity	Length of Time
10	1 day
9	3 days
8	1 week
7	2 weeks
6	1 month
5	1 year
4	1 decade
3	5 decades
2	1 century
1	5 centuries
0	Millennia +

A character in Torpor can use a Willpower point to take minor actions for a single turn once the duration of

the Torpor is up. A Willpower point allows the character to move about slowly, enabling them to drink the blood from a dead rat or crawl a short way. When a Vampire in Torpor has no Willpower left, they are unable to take any action at all, and somehow blood must be placed into their body. In such a state, they are highly vulnerable to the final death.

A character may go into Torpor voluntarily. When the character goes to sleep, the player informs the Storyteller that the character is going into a Torpor. One Blood Point is lost per day as per normal, and thereafter the character begins to lose one Health Level per day until they reach Incapacitated. Until that point, the character may voluntarily leave Torpor, but once they have reached Incapacitation, they are considered to be fully and unconditionally in Torpor and it can no longer be voluntarily left.

The blood of an Ancient can sometimes revive a Vampire in Torpor prematurely.

Sources of Injury

• **Combat:** Combat wounds are dealt with at length in the Melee and Fire Fight sections of the Drama chapter. Essentially each success on a damage roll causes the character to lose one Health Level.

• **Deterioration:** Vampires will deteriorate through lack of care. If a Vampire has been staked through the heart and cannot move, they will still lose one Blood Point a day. Once all Blood Points have been lost, the Vampire will begin to lose Health Levels, one per day. Once the Vampire has reached Incapacitated, then they are assumed to have entered Torpor. Note that Vampire's cannot "die" because of deterioration.

• **Disease:** Though Vampires can catch and even transmit human diseases, they cannot die from them. Frequently, they will become ill and may lose Health Levels, but they cannot die from a human disease. The lost Health Levels are assumed to be normal wounds and once they are healed, the Kindred is cured. However, sometimes the disease will not even affect the Vampire, in which case they become a carrier and transmit the disease to all those from whom they feed, perhaps even without their knowledge. There are said to be a number of Vampiric diseases, which are capable of killing a Kindred within days.

• **Falling:** Occasionally, a character will fall, and the fear of that occurring is essential to maintaining suspense while players are making their rolls. Use the chart below to calculate damage. Characters, mortal or Vampire, can make a Stamina + Fortitude roll to try to "soak" damage. The difficulty is an 8 and each success means they take one less Health Level in wounds. Each botch means an additional Health Level is lost.

Distance (in feet)	Injury
Five:	One Health Level
Ten:	Two Health Levels
Fifteen:	Three Health Levels
Twenty:	Four Health Levels
Thirty:	Five Health Levels
Forty:	Six Health Levels
Fifty:	Seven Health Levels and so on...

• **Fire:** Fire is quite hazardous to Vampires and they fear it more than nearly anything else. Fire always causes aggravated damage, and therefore it can kill Vampires. Any size flame can potentially harm a Vampire, but they can resist the effects with high Fortitude. Have players roll Fortitude — the difficulty is dependent on the severity and size of the flames, see the chart below for ideas. The characters must roll every turn they are in the flames to see if they can resist the damage. If they fail, they take from one to three Health Levels of damage (see the second chart below), if they succeed they take one less level of damage per success than they normally would. If they botch, they are harmed in some special way — perhaps they lose their eyesight or an arm is maimed.

Difficulty	Heat of Fire
Three —	Heat of a Candle (first degree burns)
Five —	Heat of a Torch (second degree burns)
Seven —	Heat of a Bunsen Burner (third degree burns)
Nine —	Heat of a Chemical fire
Ten —	Molten Metal

Wounds	Size of Fire
One	Torch, part of body burned
Two	Bonfire, half of body burned
Three	Raging Inferno, all of body burned

• **Sunlight:** Sunlight is one of the few ways to truly kill a Vampire. Sunlight causes aggravated wounds. Each turn that a Vampire is exposed to sunlight, they are burned. Have the player roll Fortitude each turn the character is exposed to the sun. The difficulty is dependent on the directness of the rays, the time of day, and the cloud or smog cover. See the chart below for a rough guide to assigning difficulties.

If no successes were rolled, the character takes from one to three levels of damage, which is dependent on how much they were exposed (see the second chart below). If they succeed, they take one less level of damage per success. Botches indicate that the character has actually caught fire and the character must now resist both the sunlight and the fire.

There are some "sun lamps" commercially available that can produce the ultra-violet light that the sun emits. Though these lamps do not cause nearly as much damage as

the actual sun, they can still harm Vampires, and even then the damage may not be aggravated.

Difficulty	Rays
Three —	Indirect rays, heavy cloud cover, or twilight.
Five —	Fully covered with heavy clothing.
Seven —	Through a window.
Nine —	Struck by one small direct ray of sun light, or being outside on a cloudy day.
Ten —	Direct rays from an unobscured sun.

Wounds	Size of Fire
One	Only part of body exposed (only a hand)
Two	Part of body is exposed (wearing a hood)
Three	Much of body is exposed (wearing normal clothing)

• **Extreme Heat:** Extreme heat (200 degrees plus) can injure Vampires in much the same way as fire can. Use the same system for sustaining and taking damage, but modify it according to the situation. Normally heat is not nearly as deadly as fire, unless it is terrifically intense.

• **Stake Through the Heart:** A stake through a Vampire's heart does not cause death, but does completely immobilize them. Over time, the Vampire will deteriorate due to a lack of blood, eventually causing them to fall into a full Torpor. Of course, fire or sunlight may destroy them first. It is extremely difficult to aim a stake precisely through the heart during melee. At least five successes are required for it to impact such a precisely delineated area.

• **Environment:** Though Vampires cannot die because of the cold, they can suffer the effects of frostbite and even become entirely frozen in severe temperatures. The cold is especially dangerous because Vampires do not have any body warmth, except in the minutes immediately following a feeding, so clothing of any sort is of no purpose. Characters need to make rolls after they have been outside in the cold for a certain period of time. This varies depending on how cold it is, but usually it's about half an hour. Then they make Stamina + Fortitude rolls with a difficulty starting at 3 but increasing by one every roll. The time between the rolls is determined by the Storyteller, but keep in mind that Vampires are much more resistant to cold than humans. Vampires can burn Blood Points to give themselves warmth, but such activity will not provide lasting warmth.

Frenzy

And when the rain came down,
He heard a wild dog howl,
There were voices in the night—"Don't do it!"
Voices out of sight—"Don't do it!"
Too many men have failed before.

— Chris DeBurgh, *Don't Pay the Ferryman*

Vampires are creatures of instinct, just as humans are. However, the instincts of the Vampire are the instincts of a hunter, not a gatherer. Vampires are the ultimate predators and are at the apex of the food chain, beyond even the Homo sapien. The Beast is within them and it has given them the instincts of a highly evolved killing machine.

For Vampires to survive in modern society, however, they must learn to keep the Beast in check. The impulses of violence so essential in the wild serve only to endanger the Vampire in today's complex society. The power that the rage of the Beast provides is still useful, but the blindness it creates has grown to be debilitating. Vampires struggle to suppress the Beast, but no matter how hard they try, they do not always prevail. Someday it will get loose, and the havoc it creates goes far beyond the horror of any mortal rage. Every Vampire must constantly struggle to restrain this Beast within them. The following rules describe when and how it comes to be released upon the world.

In situations where the Storyteller believes a Vampire's instincts might kick into action, the player has to make a Conscience, Self-Control or Courage roll. If they succeed in that roll, they have overcome the impulse of rage. If they fail, the character descends into a temporary insanity as the madness of the Beast takes hold. The character is only partially in the player's control, as the Vampire goes berserk.

Fortunately, Frenzies are rare occurrences. They are always a danger, but never a normality of life. When a Frenzy comes, however, it should be a moment remembered by all.

Precipitating Factors

It is always the Storyteller who decides what circumstances might provoke a Frenzy. Thus it is the Storyteller who determines when a player must make a Virtue roll to avoid going into Frenzy. This roll is called the Frenzy roll.

This decision can be something of whim, or it can be precisely calculated using the chart below to judge the nature of the circumstances. Some of the more common precipitating factors are the sight of blood, the burning glare of sunlight, or simply being angered by an enemy. A Storyteller may ignore some very blatant factors, but force the players to roll for what they consider very minor things. The Storyteller's

interpretation of the nature of the Gothic-punk world is reflected in what Frenzy rolls they ask the players to make.

These Frenzy rules are intentionally loose so that they work in whatever way best suits your Chronicle. If you want a more action-oriented Chronicle with characters who can be fairly confident of themselves, then you will not want to have very many Frenzy rolls. On the other hand, if you want the players to be very conscious of their character's essential weaknesses and you want them to roleplay out and face these weaknesses, then you will want to be more strict.

Virtues

There are three different types of situations which can call for a Frenzy roll. Each is known by one of the three Virtues (Conscience, Self-Control, and Courage), which are used to make the Frenzy roll. These Traits are rolled alone for a Frenzy roll and are never added with another Trait.

• **Conscience:** The first type of Frenzy is created by hunger and can result in the death of the Vessel as the character drinks them dry. Though the instincts may scream for blood and urge the Vampire to take it all, Conscience may tell you otherwise. This roll is made only if the character is hungry (3 Blood Points or less). It is provoked by the sight, taste or smell of blood. Thus, if you must feed while you are hungry, you risk taking too much and killing the Vessel, and thus perhaps losing Humanity.

• **Self-Control:** The second type of Frenzy is created by anger and can turn into a great Vampiric rage, which is most terrible to behold. Rage can be created by many things, and it can vary widely from character to character. It is most often provoked by humiliation, taunting or any extremely stressful situation. As the Storyteller, don't force the player to make this sort of Frenzy roll unless you think their character would react to that specific sort of antagonism (use their Nature to give you a clue).

• **Courage:** This type of Frenzy is created by fear. Vampires do not fear much, but being immortal, they fear that which can kill them. This roll can be provoked by anything the character truly fears, which is most often the rays of the sun or open flames. This roll may sometimes be required when a new Vampire is first confronted with a stake or a holy cross.

Ride the Wave

When the Storyteller calls for a Frenzy roll, the player must decide whether or not to resist the character's Vampiric instincts. If you want to resist the Frenzy, you will have to make a roll, discussed below. If you wish to simply let yourself go, then you can simply announce that you are going to Ride the Wave, and thereby gain some limited control over the course of the Frenzy. You Ride the Wave instead of being immersed in it.

By doing so, you are able to direct the motion of the Frenzy and exert some limited control over it. If you carry out the major impulses and design of the Frenzy, you can maintain some control. The Storyteller may even allow you to retain full control of your character during this time — as long as she believes that you are satisfying your basic urges. Additionally, you may use Willpower to control and direct the Frenzy. Each Willpower point may allow you to avoid a Frenzy action for a turn, and the effect of it may last longer.

Combating the Beast

Because Riding the Wave is risky, the player will often want to resist the Frenzy. You do this by making a Conscience, Self-Control or Courage roll to fight it off and overpower the character's instincts. However, if you attempt to resist the Frenzy and you fail, then you lose compete control. No storm hath greater fury.

No other Trait is factored into the Frenzy roll, save the one appropriate Virtue: either Courage, Self-Control or Conscience. It is an extended action, and five success's must be collected before the Frenzy is entirely overcome. However, even one success temporarily prevents the Frenzy from taking effect (one turn only). The difficulty for the roll is the number indicated on the chart below. Remember, you may not roll more dice on any Virtue roll than points you currently have in your Blood Pool. Hunger invariably overwhelms morality.

A success indicates that you do not Frenzy. You don't freak out and manage to keep control of yourself, though you certainly still feel the urge. Each additional success means your character can go another turn under the same circumstances without having to roll for Frenzy. When you have collected five successes, you have completely overcome the desire to Frenzy. Of course, if the stimulus that provoked the Frenzy is removed, the Vampire is no longer in danger of Frenzying and would not have to make a roll.

A failure indicates you Frenzy. What type of Frenzy your character goes into depends upon what type of Frenzy roll it was (see the chart below). The reaction describes the specific type of Frenzy — Terror, Rage or Madness.

A botch indicates a Derangement of one type or another. You not only go into a Frenzy, but gain a Derangement. The Storyteller will refer to the appropriate Derangement section to see what Derangements apply to your situation.

Reaction

During Frenzy, a character is capable of nearly any sort of immoral, risky and psychotic behavior. It is disastrous for players to have their characters go into Frenzy, for they can easily lose Humanity. The character is so out of control that the player can never be sure of what might happen.

While in a Frenzy, characters gain some benefits, as well as the obvious detriments. First of all, they may ignore the Health Level penalties to the amount equal to their Stamina — they simply do not have to apply that number of dice as

Frenzy Table

Cause	Difficulty	Virtue to Roll	Reaction
Taste of blood (when hungry)	5	Conscience	Madness
Sight of blood (when hungry)	4	Conscience	Madness
Smell of blood (when hungry)	3	Conscience	Madness
Smell and taste of death	6	Conscience	Madness
Character being Bullied	4	Self-Control	Rage
Character Angered	5	Self-Control	Rage
Compatriot in Danger	5	Self-Control	Rage
Character Humiliated	7	Self-Control	Rage
Extreme Danger	4	Courage	Terror
Sight of Sunlight	6	Courage	Terror
Open Flame	5	Courage	Terror
Being Burned	7	Courage	Terror

a penalty. Secondly, they do not have to make any standard Willpower rolls while in a Frenzy, since they are capable of doing nearly anything.

• **Madness:** If blood is available, you will take all of it that you can. You will not be able to stop yourself. You are mad for it and will seek out the closest source. It is likely that you will kill a Vessel, for you are consumed by your desire for the blood. If no blood is nearby, you will rush off in search of it. An insanity will overcome you and for a time you will be a raving lunatic. The types of Derangements created by a botched Conscience roll are different forms of forgetting — attempts to escape the horror of your evil desires and foul deeds.

• **Rage:** You become completely and uncontrollably enraged. You will attack and attempt to destroy everything and anything in sight. While you will head for your enemies first, if your friends get in the way, you will attack them as well. Each turn, the character will use a Blood Point if she feels threatened in any way. The type of Derangements created by a botched Self-Control roll are different variations of the pretension of power. They are delusions of grandeur and other obsessions.

• **Terror:** You are incapable of taking any action other than to flee for cover. Even if you have no place to flee, you are unable to take any sort of sensible action. This reaction will last for some time (five minutes or even longer in some cases). This type of Frenzy lasts until shortly after the character gets to a "safe" place or can make a successful Willpower roll to regain control. The character cannot return to that which caused the terror without spending Willpower. The type of Derangements created by a botched Courage roll are twisted versions of the basic urge to flee in terror, escape and get away.

Roleplaying Frenzy

While in a Frenzy, a character must behave with animalistic abandon, concerned only with immediate gratification — whether that means a berserker attack, blind panic, or stark raving madness depends on the stimuli for the Frenzy. No logical thought occurs and all reactions are intuitive and emotional.

If players describe actions for their characters that go against what you believe to be appropriate during a Frenzy, allow them to do so, but then announce that they've lost a Willpower point. If they don't have any Willpower left, then take over the character yourself for the remainder of the Frenzy. Frenzy is not something trivial. If the player can't roleplay it

Kyle tries to move aside, but his will is lost to his body.

right, you've got to do it yourself — the character will come out of it eventually so this "punishment" isn't permanent.

The player can decide to use a Willpower point on their own in order to let them control their actions for a single turn This is just enough time to formulate a single thought or purpose, and unless other events get in the way, the character's behavior will be guided over the following few turns. Just keep in mind that using Willpower can't stop the Frenzy, it only offers a little control over what form it takes.

Duration

Frenzy can last a variable length of time. It is up to the Storyteller to decide when it comes to an end. In some ways, Frenzy is an attribute of blood and it moves along a similar adrenaline type cycle. When adrenalin in a mortal would stop flowing, things calm down and the tension level falls, then slowly the Frenzy comes to a stop. Frenzy lasts for the duration of the scene. When the scene comes to an end, let the player begin to roleplay his character normally again.

However, sometimes this approach will not work, such as when a player wants to fight off the Frenzy. If a player wants to try to fight it off, then let him make Willpower rolls. Do not allow him to make a roll whenever he pleases however. Only let him do so if he convinces you that an opportunity for regaining control has arrived for his character. The player might even try to manufacture such a moment through roleplaying — this won't always work, but sometimes it will. Be strict about it and don't allow the roll until you can imagine how the character has truly been given a chance to stop and realize what he is doing.

The Willpower roll should have a difficulty of at least 8, and more often it should be a 9. If successful, the character manages to overcome the Frenzy. If they fail, they lose a Willpower point, but they can try again later. If they botch, they have fallen even deeper into Frenzy and cannot make another Willpower roll. A strict Storyteller may even make this an extended roll, requiring 2-5 successes for the Frenzy to be completely shaken off. One success means they stop for a single turn, but they will revert to the Frenzy soon unless more successes are gained during the next turn.

A character can't always stop a Frenzy on his own — often he'll need help. His friends can help him overcome a Frenzy by speaking with and confronting him. They must make appropriate Social rolls (difficulty of 8+), with each success allowing the player an extra die on his Willpower roll to resist the Frenzy. However, only those who have successfully resisted Frenzy in the presence of the character, or are exceptionally close to the character emotionally, may attempt this. A botch on the player's Willpower roll could well mean that he attacks those who tried so hard to help him.

Provoking Frenzy

On rare occasion, your players may wish to provoke their characters into a Frenzy. The character must provoke Frenzy by clawing their own skin, using Blood Points, roleplaying out anger, or even by extending a hand into the sunlight. Only once an instinctive response has begun can the Frenzy roll be made.

Example of Frenzy

One night, Mark organizes an intimate game session with only two players—Lisa and her friend Ann. Lisa is playing Malcolm and Ann is playing another Gangrel, a woman named Erion Hix. Malcolm is pursuing his ongoing vendetta against the drug kings of Chicago. However, the crackhouse Malcolm wants to bring down this story is a main one of the Caranetti Cartel, so he needs some extra firepower. Hix was only recently Embraced, but perviously served as a Captain in the U.S. Army. In an earlier story, Malcolm used his connections at the precinct to prevent one of Hix's friends from being arrested, so Hix is helping Malcolm to repay her debt.

Malcolm has located the Caranetti Cartel' scrackhouse, and he plans to break in and gather evidence. Since he isn't a cop anymore, he intends to smash the place up a little and learn who the drug pushers report to, so he can eradicate them at a later date.

The raid goes very well, especially with Hix's professional help, but Malcolm is severely injured by a chest-shot and needs to spend six Blood Points to heal himself. In order to replenish his Blood Pool, he takes blood from one of the guards, who unfortunately has smoked a great deal of crack prior to the Vampires' attack. The drug is still in his blood stream and will thus affect Malcolm.

At a climatic point in the story, a number of the drug king's heavies burst into the "cutting room" that Malcolm and Hix are combing for evidence. A battle breaks out and play proceeds as follows:

Mark: Okay, Lisa and Ann, the surprise of the sudden entry of these armed thugs triggers your instinctive training to kill or be killed. I want both of you to roll for Frenzy, use Self-Control. The difficulty is a 4, except that Malcolm is wired because of the drugs, so his difficulty is a 7. What are you going to do?

Lisa: I'm going to try to overcome my urge to Frenzy. (She rolls Malcolm's Self-Control trait and doesn't get a single 7.) Oh no, Malcolm failed. "All right you bastards, eat lead and die," Malcolm screams and starts firing at anything that moves, standing in the middle of the room and unloading an entire clip.

Mark: That's right — you're going nuts.

Ann: Hix is going to try to ride the Frenzy. She crouches behind the desk and methodically proceeds to fire at targets Malcolm is missing in his Frenzied state.

Mark: Well, we'll see, it might not be as easy as you make it sound. (Then Mark has Lisa roll a number of combat rolls.) Malcolm, you pump an entire clip into the drug king's men and they drop like flies. (Mark rolls his own combat rolls.) A number of bullets also zip into you, but you don't notice them. Hix, because Malcolm is the center of attention, you remain unnoticed and (Ann makes her combat rolls) you manage to put a couple of men out of the action. The remaining men, fearing for their lives, put their hands into the air, yelling their surrender.

Lisa: Malcolm is starting to freak and he feels that any of these slimy druggies might get the drop on him. Sweat is pouring from his face and his hands are shaking. (In a nervous, stuttering, shaky voice), "Alright, you bastards, down on the floor, NOW. Move it. Don't make any moves."

Ann: I spend a Willpower point to not pump continual rounds into the gunmen now that they have surrendered.

Mark: Alright, Malcolm, one of the SOB's looks like he's reaching for his gun.

Lisa: I try to hold back.

Mark: Make a Frenzy roll again, using a point of Willpower, with a difficulty of 9.

Lisa: I missed! Malcolm goes nuts and blows the man away.

Mark: The rest dive for cover. You hear a lot of grumbles from the floor. They seem to be taunting you, daring you to put an end to their miserable lives.

Malcolm: I shoot them all.

Ann: Hix is going to try to stop Malcolm. She slowly walks over to him with her hands out. "Malcolm, it's okay, it's over and the bad guys are all dead or will be soon. Calm down, buddy."

Mark: Fine. Malcolm, you have little problem blowing the remaining two heavies to kingdom come. You might lose Humanity, though, so roll your Courage and try to get at least one 6 in order to avoid a loss of Humanity. (Lisa rolls 4 dice for Malcolm's Courage and gets a single success, avoiding Humanity loss for the time being).

However, there is still one left, a woman by the looks of it and she has a gun drawn. She's walking towards you with a slow steady step. She looks pretty sure of herself. You think she might be trying to talk to you, but the rush in your head makes her words seem like gibberish.

Lisa: As I swing my guns toward her, I try to stop my Frenzy by spending 3 Willpower points. I really don't want to blow Hix away and I think that her words might get through to me now that the immediate danger is over.

Mark: Alright, but the difficulty is still 7. You can roll your Courage again, including your 3 willpower, and see if you can get at least two 7's. Hix, if he misses, you'll be at an extreme disadvantage to avoid getting shot. You also need to spend another Willpower point to stay calm, because Malcolm is still freaking and he is putting you in great danger.

Ann: That's alright, I spend the Willpower and continue to talk soothingly, pointing my gun away from Malcolm.

Lisa: (Rolling) Yeah! Three 7's. Malcolm searches for a name to put to the voice he is hearing from this woman and slowly the rush of adrenaline wears off and he winds down. It's just Hix.

Mark: Good. As you wind down Malcolm, the pain from you gunshot wound starts to take effect. You are severely injured What are you going to do next?

Lisa: "I think I want to lie down."

From here on out, they continue the story as Malcolm and Hix escape from the crackhouse and continue to track down the kingpin. Eventually, they discover that the ring is controlled by a Vampire, one of the Prince's favorites, and they have to give up the hunt — at least for the time being. Malcolm decides to throw in with the Anarchs of the city, perhaps giving him a chance to strike back at the one who is causing all this misery.

Derangements

There's a red under my bed
And there's a little green man in my head
He said your not going crazy, you're just kinda sad
Cause there's a man in you, knawing you,
Tearing you into two.

— The Kinks, *Destroyer*

There are times when the results of a Frenzy can cause some sort of mental pathology in a character. This results when a Frenzy roll is botched. The character picks up some sort of quirk, neurotic tendency or even psychosis that will take them a great deal of time and effort to overcome.

The effects of the Derangement may present themselves in a variety of ways. In a story, a character may be unable to prevent herself from drinking the blood a child, and then two days later, after everyone else has forgotten the incident, begin a wild gambling spree in an effort to forget the horror of the scene. How and why a Derangement begins, in terms of the story, is a joint decision of the player and the Storyteller. Normally, it begins soon after the botched Frenzy roll, but they can be caused by many other factors.

When a character gains a Derangement, the Storyteller must determine the type. First, look at the type of Frenzy roll the character made. Was the reaction Madness, Rage or Terror? The Derangements are divided into these three categories, giving you a general idea of where to look. Then you must decide how their Derangement expresses itself in particular by selecting an appropriate Derangement in that section, or you could let the player choose. You can roll a die to decide what Derangement they gain, but we don't recommend this method. In some circumstances you could even allow your more experienced players to create their own unique Derangement.

The blood is mortal, but for Shelzza its fragrance is overwhelming.

Roleplaying Derangement

These Derangements are not meant to be all-consuming and hamstring the player into roleplaying in a tightly constricted way. Rather, they are meant to add some fun and a little bit of reality into the game. A character doesn't have to exhibit the Derangement 100% of the time. People can slip in and out of it, and it may only surface in particularly tense moments. The Derangement does not have to *rule* the mind of the character, it only need influence it.

Derangements can be both extremely difficult and interesting to play out. Therefore, as Storyteller, it is incumbent upon you to keep a careful eye on making sure that things don't get out of hand. Players have two bad habits when it comes to Derangements. They either forget they have them, or they let them get so out of control that the Derangement takes over the story and the game session. Don't let your players do either.

To stop the player from conveniently forgetting they have a Derangement, simply tell them every once in a while that they have successfully controlled their Derangement, but had to use up a Willpower point to do so. If they keep on forgetting even after they've used up all their Willpower points, simply send them back into a Frenzy — after all, it's difficult to control that nasty Derangement.

However, to prevent the player from getting out of control with their Derangement, you'll sometimes have to use more forceful tactics. Take them aside and tell them that you like their sense of drama but that they're overplaying it just a bit. If they continue to use their Derangement to hog all the attention, give them a new Derangement, one that forces a certain degree of retreat from the world, like Catatonia.

Overcoming Derangements

A player can use a Willpower point on their own to overcome a Derangement for one Scene. One Willpower can suppress the Derangement for the entirety of a scene, so for a brief interlude it doesn't need to completely screw up things. Any time the Derangement starts to get in the way, the player has the option to escape it for a short time at a very minimal cost. Plus, using Willpower points in this manner is how the character eventually overcomes the Derangement.

When the character has spent a certain designated amount of Willpower on combating the effects of the Derangement, they finally manage to escape from it. They no longer have the Derangement and it can be erased from the character sheet. The number of Willpower it "costs" is equal

to the sum sheet. The number of Willpower it "costs" is equal to the sum of two die rolls — thus it could be a number from 2-20. The Storyteller should roll the dice and keep track of it, not revealing to the player how difficult it is. The player should keep track of how many Willpower they have spent, but not know how many they need to overcome the Derangement.

When a Derangement is finally conquered, the character will often break down as the realization of what they have done and what they have become floods their consciousness and they begin to feel emotions they have repressed for a long time. It is a unique opportunity for roleplaying.

The friends of a character can do a great deal of good by using Empathy to help a character deal with her feelings. A roll must be made with an appropriate Social Attribute, the difficulty to be set by the Storyteller (make it high). If they succeed in the roll, it is the same as if a Willpower point had been expended. However, a roll cannot simply be made, it must be roleplayed out. Don't even let them try to make the roll if it can't be made a dramatic element of the story. The roll can only be made if it is at the climax of a subplot of the story.

Madness Derangements:

You attempt to escape from the horror of what has been done by ignoring it or chasing it from your mind. You are driven stark raving mad because of the evil desire that overwhelmed you. By involving yourself completely in other activities, you seek to forget what you know to be true about yourself. This escape can take a number of different forms, though usually it is emotional rather than physical.

1) Multiple Personalities: You have a radical change in personality. For the duration of the Derangement, you sometimes have a different effective Nature; often it is one opposite of your normal Nature. During the story, you will switch back and forth between the two personalities. You may even have more than one alternate Nature switching between a number of different personalities. Thus they behave in radically different ways and regain Willpower points at different times. Naturally, this causes others to distrust and be wary of you.

2) Fantasy: You enter a self-created delusionary world of fantasy in which you are the unappreciated hero. Your desire to be good and pure is fulfilled by accomplishing imaginary achievements, which sometimes partially overlap with reality and at other times are complete delusion.

3) Regression: You become childlike, retreating to an earlier time in your life when less was required of you. It is very difficult for you to do anything for yourself and for others to do things for you. You cannot use your Knowledges for as long as you have this Derangement. This is a very extreme form of the child Archetype, and Willpower is regained in the way a child's is, not according to the character's normal Nature.

4) Procrastination: You do not attend to what you should be doing in an attempt to deny what you did earlier. By refusing to perceive the reality of what you have done, you avoid painful situations. In avoiding doing anything that might somehow be connected to the event, you are able to ignore it. Of course, this means you can't focus on anything, otherwise you are continually reminded of what happened.

5) Blood Frenzy: You become consumed with the one need that you have left — the need for blood. The pursuit and ecstasy of taking blood becomes central in your life, and you will let nothing get in your way when the desire wells within you (ie. when you have less than three Blood Points).

6) Whiner: You seek to gain sympathy from others in order to bolster your feelings of self-worth despite your abject "failure" (whatever caused the Frenzy). Until you have overcome your Derangement, you constantly seek the approval of others. Unless you get it from *all* your friends, you cannot regain Willpower points. In some situations, you may not even be able to use Willpower points.

7) Identification: You identify yourself closely with another character, or perhaps an institution or TV persona. You try to act in every possible way like that person as a way to avoid having to think about who you really are. Assume the Demeanor of that person.

8) Gambling: You become an inveterate gambler, unable to control your need for taking risks and your craving for that kind of high. You may gamble not only in casinos or on sporting events, but also with your life during the course of a story. Every chance you get you will take risks, especially if there is some type of potential gain to be made.

9) Perfection: Everything must be perfect in your life. You use all your energy to prevent anything from going wrong. When it does, as inevitably it must, you completely flip and must make a Humanity roll to resist Frenzy.

10) Invent New Derangement

Rage Derangements:

You place the blame for your weakness and loss of Self-Control upon some outside force, "It's not my fault. He made me do it." That person or force then becomes the focus for great rage and anger as you project all your pent up emotion on that one person, which could well be another player's character. You cannot resist any opportunity to direct your wrath upon this object and will spend considerable energy plotting against it. You have developed a rage that consumes your every thought and directs all of your desires and motivations.

You incorporate the values and standards of what you believe yourself to be so completely that you hope to avoid actually soiling your true self with your actions. You attack something outside of yourself, to protect yourself on the inside. You may become obsessed with something that is the opposite of what you have done.

1) Arrogance: You become so full of pride that you refuse to acknowledge any weaknesses. This often

occurs to someone with an inferiority complex as a way of overcompensating. The desire for greatness and the equally strong desire for an easy way out, join together in a search for glory. You may believe that you are amazingly handsome, perceptive, witty or all of the above. It is likely that you will get into very dangerous situations by overplaying your strengths and ignoring your weaknesses.

2) Overcompensation: You cover up your moral weaknesses by playing up one of your moral strengths, overly so. You believe that you are exceptionally moral and virtuous in one way or another — that you are honorable, loyal, brave, compassionate or self-controlled. Your behavior is thus straight jacketed by your desire. You constantly lecture others on their moral weaknesses, and demonstrate extreme arrogance about what you believe to be your strengths. Of course when the forces of reality reveal the emptiness of your delusion, the embarrassment will be great. You do not believe yourself capable of falling into Frenzy, and will thus do nothing to prevent or avoid situations that might cause it.

3) Cynicism: You become cynical toward everything in life, believing all people and things to be as tainted as yourself. You deny and deride moral values, find most things and people uninteresting, and refuse to form or abide by any values because you believe there are none that are worthwhile. A cynical character accepts their Frenzies as a matter of course, and will do *nothing* to gain new Virtues, Willpower or Humanity—after all, what is the point?

4) Total Restraint: You are so shocked by what you have done that you decide you must never let it happen again. You restrict and control yourself so that those actions which caused your Derangement will never occur again, you will certainly not allow yourself to be put in places or situations where you will be at risk. Self-Control is the only thing with which you are concerned. Every single time that the character becomes at all irrational (Frenzy) you must expend a Willpower point to exert Self-Control without hesitation. You must continue to use Willpower until the situation is over. If you run out of Willpower points, you simply cannot deal with the situation and temporarily retreat into some other form of Derangement.

5) Moralistic: You believe yourself to be highly moral and virtuous, and insist upon the highest standards of morality. Yet you still have problems with the weakness of your own heart. You are arrogant and demanding that others correct their deficiencies, but tend to ignore your own weaknesses. Thus, if loyalty became the focus of your Derangement, you would be so loyal that every action would be taken in light of your loyalty to your friends. Absolutely no action could go against it — none at all.

6) Obsession: You become obsessed with some interest or fetish as a reaction to what you have experienced. It is some sort of perverse ambition toward which you direct all of your energy, like an obsession for power, a certain person, amulets or even blood. You need something to focus on, to give your life meaning. As you lose Humanity, you lose your connection with the normal and accepted human obsessions — eating, drinking and sex. You no longer need the things that used to drive you mad, yet paradoxically their absence is driving you insane (which you perhaps already might be). To replace them you give yourself an obsession.

7) Power Mad: You become a control freak, and seek total and absolute control over everything around you, including other characters' actions. There is nothing you do not try to have some say in or some power over. In every way possible, you will attempt to get ahold of information and possessions that will give you power over others.

8) Vengeance: Those who have wronged you will pay for what they have done. You will not rest until they have been punished for their sins. Everything you do has to be directed toward this vengeance. If the others in your Brood do not steadfastly pursue the one who injured you, then you will have to leave them. Of course they might try to persuade you that they need to "build up to it." This Derangement will end if the object of the vengeance is eliminated, but in such a case the character must make a Humanity roll with a difficulty of eight.

9) Innocence: While on the outside you might have gone into a rampage, on the inside you protect your innocence. You sublimate your horror of your own actions by immersing yourself in your pretensions of purity. Gifts to the poor and help for those less fortunate than yourself are not out of character for you, and you will do nearly anything to prove to others that you are indeed a good person, pure of heart. You will jealously protect what you believe to be your new found salvation. Though you may admit your past sins, you insist that you are over that stage and are a new person. You have complete faith in your ability to resist Frenzy, though in fact you have no new means of resisting it. When you do fall into a Frenzy, you lose all self-pride and are unable to roll or use Willpower for the remainder of the story.

10) Invent New Derangement

Terror Derangements:

Because of your experience, you have grown fearful and distrustful of the world. You are no longer as open to the world as you once were. By discharging pent-up feelings upon "objects" which are less dangerous and disturbing than the event which caused the loss of Humanity, you will stop thinking about what happened. Below are some ways your fear might express itself.

1) Fear of Death: You are afraid of dying and are extremely careful about what you do to ensure that you do not put yourself in the slightest danger. You will not enter combat unless you are backed into a corner.

2) Fear of Vampires: You are terribly afraid of other Vampires, at least the ones you do not call friends, and will avoid them at all costs. You refuse to call yourself a Vampire

or to use any of your powers if they are something you know to be of Vampiric origin.

3) Fear of Fear: You are terrified by the thought of your own fear and the results that might come from its expression. You seek to hide that fear within you and refuse to deal with it up front. You are nearly paralyzed with the thought that at some point you might be too afraid of taking action to save yourself. This thought can of course paralyze you.

4) Paranoia: You are convinced that you are being hunted and that there is no escape. You are obsessed with those you believe to be chasing you and make all kinds of preparations to protect yourself. Under no circumstances will you trust anyone, you will hold even your closest friends under suspicion at times.

5) Amnesia: So you don't have to think about what you have done, you forget a segment of your past, perhaps even about the experience of becoming a Vampire. This can make things very interesting for a time. This repression prevents those dangerous memories from entering the consciousness and you simply forget that the event ever happened. More than that event can be forgotten however, and total amnesia is even possible. Additionally, in some cases a character may "forget" some Abilities, and be unable to use them for the duration of the Derangement.

6) Depression: You sink into a deep and fitful depression, and show no interest in anything that might previously have captured your attention. The world is flat and grey, and there is nothing in it for you anymore. You cannot rouse yourself to do anything, though you will let yourself be dragged along rather than use the energy to resist.

7) Catatonia: This extreme form of fear causes the character to completely withdraw, perhaps by curling up in a fetal position, and ignoring everything that goes on around them. If the experience was particularly shocking, or if it was a horrifying repeat of a previous event, then they might go into complete catatonia. Otherwise, the character will withdraw substantially but can still be coaxed into eating. However, they will not take any action on their own until they recover.

8) Intellectualization: You no longer feel emotions, but insulate yourself in a world of logic and intellectual vigor. By isolating your incompatible attitudes and behavior into different compartments, you avoid being hurt. Unfortunately, you also are unable to grow, and cannot use experience points to raise Traits other than Knowledge Traits while you have this Derangement.

9) Delusion of Grandeur: You imagine that you are far better and greater than you really are — you adopt a glorious self ideal. Perhaps you think of yourself as Prince or Justicar, or you may believe yourself to be the mayor or a religious leader. By imagining yourself safe from that which you fear, you avoid the terror which looms so near. However, whenever the delusion is broken, a Courage roll must be immediately made to see if the character will Frenzy or not, difficulty of only 5.

10) Invent New Derangement

Humanity

So now ask yourself,
What is human and what is truth?
Ask yourself,
Whose voice is it that whispers up to you
From the cellars of your homes.
From the tops of your city roofs?
Ask yourself,
Whose voice is it that whispers unto you?

— The The, *Good Morning Beautiful*

Sometimes a character will take an immoral action, either willfully or despite their best intentions (e.g. Frenzy). In such cases, they might lose some of their Humanity. The character's conscience reacts to what they have done, and this may affect how they see themselves in the future. For a Vampire, this actually indicates how much the Beast has taken of their soul.

How you control the loss of Humanity is one of the most important elements of your role as Storyteller. If you let the players get away with anything, then the whole fabric of the game is destroyed. Conversely, if you're too strict, the Chronicle will last about three game sessions. You can play a little loosely with these Humanity rules, but never let them fall to the wayside.

Whenever a character takes an action which you believe to be questionable (morally speaking), you may decide that it is serious enough to warrant a Humanity roll. A Humanity roll is made by using one of the three Virtues: Conscience, Self-Control and Courage. Nothing else is added to the Virtue. The difficulty is almost always 6, though it can vary at the discretion of the Storyteller.

If the player is successful in the roll by getting even one single success, then they do not lose the Humanity point. If they fail the roll, or botch, then they lose a point of the Virtue which they rolled, as well as a Humanity point. A botch also indicates that the character gains a Derangement as a result of the mental trauma of the loss of Humanity.

What to Roll

Which Virtue is rolled depends on the circumstances. If the transgression occurred during a Frenzy, simply have the player roll the same Virtue they rolled to attempt to resist going into Frenzy. You may wish to let the player choose which Virtue to roll, so that they have some control over which Virtue will drop if the roll fails. In most cases, however, you need to decide. Some hints are given below.

Conscience: Have the player roll Conscience if the character has harmed another individual. If he is successful, the

Self-Control: Have the player roll Self-Control if the character gave in to his urges. If the roll is successful, the character reconfirms that in the future he will not allow this sort of thing to happen again. It indicates that they have decided to exert more Self-Control in the future, while a failure indicates they don't give a damn.

Courage: Have the player roll Courage if the character demonstrated great cowardice. If she is successful, the character has faced up to what she has done and has fully admitted their guilt.

Warnings

You should always try to warn a player before they are about to take an action that will result in them losing a Humanity point. They should understand the consequences of what they are doing and be able to savor the anticipation if there is a chance they might not be able to do anything about it (e.g. they're in a Frenzy). When the players get complacent and think they can get away with anything, that's when you should start to warn them. However, never warn them that they might lose a Humanity point and then not require them to make a roll.

Can a corpse feel pain? When life yet resides in a bloodless frame, then pain is but a secondary concern.

Hierarchy of Sins

As the character loses progressively more Humanity, many things will be less likely to cause further loss of Humanity. Those with a high Humanity might have to make a Humanity roll for the slightest little "sin," while those with very low Humanity must do something terrible to have to make a roll. In other words, be exceptionally strict with the characters with high Humanity, but only force those with low Humanity to make a roll if they go way over the boundary between right and wrong.

Below we have provided a guide to help you decide what actions should result in the loss of Humanity. A very bestial person would not lose Humanity if he stole something, while a very moral character certainly would. Someone with a Humanity of 7 would not have to roll for an action so minor as that listed beside Humanity 10. However, everything on this list would count for a person with 10 Humanity.

Regardless of a character's Humanity, it is always the Storyteller's decision as to when a player must make a Humanity roll. Even when it might not make "sense" according to the rules, you may be asked to make the roll. Humanity is an intrinsic part of **Vampire** and a Storyteller calls for certain Humanity rolls in order to shape the Chronicle in the fashion she desires. The Storyteller's own morality is often reflected in the way they call for Humanity rolls — this is not only acceptable, but encouraged. Even if you might not understand why you need to make the roll, trust your Storyteller.

Humanity	Minimum Wrong doing for Humanity roll
10	— Accidental wrongdoing
9	— Any sort of purposeful wrongdoing
8	— Shoplifting
7	— Theft and robbery
6	— Unintentional killing
5	— Wanton destruction
4	— Causing injury and personal harm
3	— Sadism and perversion
2	— Murder
1	— The most heinous and demented acts

Roleplaying It

Often the effects of a shock to one's Humanity are not always felt immediately, but instead become apparent only after the passing of time. The character may feel the shock for a matter of days before something arises that can demonstrate their new lower Humanity. The action that makes it clear to others that they have changed can be a lot of fun to roleplay. A player does not necessarily start roleplaying it out right away, but can work into it naturally.

Gaining Humanity

Players can gain Humanity as well, but only after prolonged and consistent artistic or aesthetically-based behavior. When a character does a good deed, this may result in them gaining a new point of Humanity. However, it's not quite as simple as it may sound. The Storyteller, as always, is the final adjudicator.

Be very strict about how characters can regain Humanity,. Remember that over the course of the Chronicle, the characters should slowly be losing more and more Humanity. Preserving the status quo should be difficult enough for a character, so it should be nearly impossible to gain new Humanity.

You may wish to make it a specific reward gained after a particularly vigorous story in which there was no real or practical reward offered or given. Only the rescue of some unfortunate or the persistent search for some kernel of truth or goodness will be enough to gain new Humanity. Even then, the gain doesn't have to be certain, a Virtue roll could be called for with a success required to gain the point.

For instance, a Vampire with high Auspex may become aware that a locus has sprung up around a mortal somewhere in Paris. Acting only on a hunch, and with no idea as to the source of the locus, the character may go to Paris to look for this individual. She will eventually find the mortal and discover that they are bound in some eerie way. In the end, she learns that this mortal is the direct human descendent of their Sire, and that she needs protection. In becoming involved with the mortal, they gain a new sense of their own Humanity and therefore a gain in Humanity might not be out of place.

Golconda

Should the whole frame of nature round him break,
In ruin and confusion hurled,
He, unconcerned, would hear the mighty crack,
And stand secure amidst a falling world.

— Joseph Addison, *Translation of Horace, Odes*

The theme of **Vampire** is often centered around the Hero's Journey, the quest to discover who you really are. It is the journey of Prometheus, the Greek hero who brought us fire.

At the point where you overcome your sin and approach the end of your quest, there are two things that can result. Either you become mortal once again, or you become a new kind of Vampire and no longer feel the urge to Frenzy, the need to feed, or the desire to sin so strongly.

Golconda is a state of being where the character has managed to control their Frenzies and restrain the Beast. Golconda is the state all Kindred of clear mind seek, unless they seek a total release from their life in death. Golconda is not an easy state of being to attain, but for many it is the only goal worth having. It must not be misunderstood, for it is not a reconnection to one's mortality, in fact quite the opposite. Golconda is an acceptance and hence control over one's bestiality. Golconda is the final acceptance of one's curse and the gaining of power over it.

Basic to Golconda is the act of remorse. This is not necessarily any sort of religious repentance, but rather a more personal and immediate realization of the sins one has committed. The character must make some sort of penance, such as donating to a charity, aiding someone in need, or in some cases even punishing themselves. The worse the sin, the more they need to do.

You should allow the players to reach Golconda very rarely — only if they do a superb job of trying to make things right and experience profound remorse for what they are and what they have become. As the Storyteller, ask yourself whether the character truly feels remorse — whether they feel compassion or not. How well has the player roleplayed through the whole process of grief and regret? Golconda should never be easily earned. In most cases, it should occur only at the end of a Chronicle. A new Chronicle could begin later on with the same character, but with an entirely different concept and motif.

It should take several game sessions to complete the process — one entire story. More than one character can attempt to reach Golconda, but it is normally something only a few can try at one time.

In some ways, Golconda can be seen as a movement within the Kindred, but if it is a movement, it does not have much organization. Some who have reached Golconda are very evangelistic and seek to encourage others to follow the same path to peace. They wish to bring all of the Kindred into the peace that Golconda brings. Some of them even travel from city to city speaking about Golconda, and encouraging those who are interested into learning more. They do not reveal the secrets of Golconda, for each supplicant must learn of it on their own, but they will give hints.

There is said to be an Antediluvian who has reached Golconda and who supports those who spread word of it. This Ancient's role in the Jyhad is said to be one of thwarting the others from succeeding in their plots to destroy the Kindred. Only those among the Inconnu would know anything of this creature. Of course, the critics of the Golconda movement decry the whole movement as being a minor intrigue in the great Jyhad. The truth of the matter will perhaps never be known.

Quest

There aren't really any rules for determining when a character reaches Golconda, for this is something that must come about as a part of roleplaying. Golconda is a state of being very nearly indecipherable from any other state of being — it is

subtle and soft. Thus, it is the Storyteller's responsibility to set the storytelling conditions for when the change can occur. The player perhaps might not even know that they have reached Golconda until the Storyteller starts having them make a few rolls differently.

Golconda is akin to the nature of a quest. The quest is not so much a scavenger hunt as it is a spiritual and mental journey into one's own spirit. Often the quest for Golconda takes one to the Astral plane or into the chaos of one's own mind. The roleplaying involved can become extremely powerful, and should only be attempted after the character has been developed over a number of stories and the player has a firm grasp of who and what they are. Golconda is about the transformation of a personality, thus the character must have a complete and detailed personality for it to be any fun.

The quest for Golconda often begins with the character's search for what it is. In the first chapter of the story, you need to build a desire for Golconda and increase its allure to the players. Only slowly should the characters begin to realize what it is all about.

The second stage of the story is the search for an Elder who can tell the characters more about Golconda. Normally this can only be one of the enigmatic members of the Inconnu, someone who has already attained Golconda. This mentor must be convinced to aid the characters who wish to reach Golconda. The mentor may require different "tasks" to be completed to prove that the character is worthy.

The characters must prove that they do indeed feel remorse. The tasks are likely to be things which require the characters to make up for what they have done in the past, to right past wrongs, or even to go back to the families of their past victims and aid them. The roleplaying involved dredges up everything that happened throughout the Chronicle and makes the players relive it. Hopefully, this will bring them into even greater contact with their characters.

When the mentor is finally convinced that the characters have proven themselves (though it is possible that only one of the characters will prove themselves sufficiently), then he shall initiate the final stage of the quest — the ritual. This expansive ceremony can last several weeks or several months, and involves many quests into the dreams of the supplicant. This stage is known as the Suspire and many stories are told of it. The dreams are said to be provoked by draughts of blood from one's closest companions, who travel with the supplicant through the world of dreams.

The mentor must oversee the Suspire, and often it takes place at his or her Haven. No one truly knows what occurs at this ritual, for only those who successfully attain Golconda live through it, and they aren't talking. Most of those who do survive join the Inconnu and live out their lives apart from mortal civilization. (Note: not all of the Inconnu have reached Golconda, only a significant minority.)

However, despite all this talk about roleplaying, there are a few practical criteria for reaching Golconda. These are as essential as the story and roleplaying elements discussed above. First of all, the character's Humanity rating must be a 7 or higher (if it ever falls below a 7, then the character has lost Golconda). Secondly, the character's Conscience rating must be at least 4. Lastly, over the duration of the quest for Golconda, the character must spend Willpower points to overcome all urges to Frenzy, do wrong or waver from the true path. Normally at least 15 points must be spent. This reflects the determination of the character to reach Golconda and the self affirmation that the quest provokes. It is not easy to reach Golconda, but for many it is the only goal worth pursuing.

More will be said on Golconda in the **Storyteller's Handbook**.

Benefits

Once Golconda has been reached, you are at peace with yourself. You no longer exist in a life filled with self-horror and self-pity. You have finally mastered the Beast within by accepting that the Beast is a part of you.

There is only one major benefit for having reached Golconda, but this one is enough. When a Vampire reaches Golconda, they no longer Frenzy. No Frenzy rolls need ever be made for as long as they remain in Golconda.

A lesser benefit is the fact that the character does not need to drink blood as often. The character only loses one blood point per week, rather than one blood point per day. If the Vampire has reached the age where the need for even more potent blood arises, then the desire is more subdued because of the Golconda and is easily pushed aside.

Rebirth

Live baby live, now that the day is over.
I gotta new sensation,
In perfect moments impossible to refuse
Sleep baby sleep, now that the night is over.

— INXS, *New Sensation*

It is possible for a Vampire to escape the curse and become mortal again. Though it is exceedingly difficult, it is a major theme of the game and something that will direct the ambitions and thoughts of many characters.

Truly exquisite moments can be created in roleplaying through the search for Rebirth. When characters who have searched together for Rebirth finally arrive at the point where it is finally possible, they must decide whether they wish to actually become mortal again.

It is never possible to accomplish this through the rules, but must instead be a primary element of the story and a part of the roleplaying. There are a variety of myths and legends among the Kindred about how Rebirth might come about. Which myths are true and which are false is up to the

Storyteller to decide. Rebirth impossible if it is not the focus of the Chronicle. However, if you do wish to include it, here are some ideas on how Vampires might achieve Rebirth.

• If the characters manage to kill their Sire, they may be freed from the Curse. Or perhaps they must slay their Sire's Sire, or even progress further up the blood line. Eventually, they will manage to kill the Sire of the Sire who will allow them to be freed. However, the one they must kill might be an Antediluvian, and it is unlikely they will ever be able to slay one of these Ancients. Why it is possible for some to slay only their master and be freed, while others must go further along the blood line is unknown. If there is a logic to it, then it has not yet been discovered.

• If a character sacrifices herself for another person and dies in the attempt, then it is possible that it may be the death of a mortal. The sacrifice was so great that in death the Vampire is restored to mortal form. In situations where a character has just died, this can be just the thing to shine new light on the situation. This sort of "poetic justice" might not be appropriate in your Chronicle — it's your call.

• There are a number of complicated rituals which can be enacted that can end the Curse and rescue a character from the Damned. These rituals must be researched, the "ingredients" found, and the proper time and place decided. If one factor is wrong, the ritual could end in the final death of the character, not her salvation.

• It is said that at the final point of the Golconda ritual, it is possible to choose to be mortal, rather than obtaining Golconda itself. Many Elders deny this, but as it is unlikely they have reached Golconda, it is difficult to decide whether they know the truth.

Diablerie

It's the jewel of victory
The chasm of misery
And once you have bitten the core
You will always know the flavor
The split second of divinity.

— Faith No More, *The Real Thing*

It is possible for Vampires to garner immense powers, advancing even in the Potence of their blood, and thereby coming closer to the quintessential power of Caine. In fact, it is the very availability of this advancement in power that created and now fuels the eternal conflict between the Kindred — the great Jyhad. It is the lust for this potential that causes the Neonates to slay their Sires, and it is the fear of this lust that causes the Elders to distrust and persecute their Fledglings.

The process by which a Vampire kills another in order to rise in power is called Diablerie or the Amaranth — the quest for eternal power. The Amaranth is a legendary undying flower, a treasure beyond price. The Kindred have appropriated this word as their own, and use it to refer to the ambition and aggression that drives the younger Kindred to slay their Sire and other Elders. The evil of this is counterbalanced by the Elders who hunt the Anarchs for Kindred blood.

When a Vampire drinks from another and drains away all his Blood, and then keeps drinking so that their Vampiric Vessel loses all Health Levels, they can extinguish the existence of that Vampire. In so doing, not only is the Vessel killed, but his life-force is passed along to the slayer. The essential Potence of the spirit is passed along. If the Vessel was of an earlier Generation than the character who drank the Blood, then the character's effective Generation is raised by one. This allows the character to be able to Dominate a larger number of the Kindred (you can only Dominate Vampires who are of a later Generation) and provides other considerable powers (see the Setting Chapter, page 184, for more details).

If a character wishes to continue drinking the Blood of a Vampiric Vessel, even after all the Blood is drained, they must roll Strength, with a difficulty of 9. Each success indicates that the target loses one Health Level. No Blood is actually drained, but instead the very spirit of the Vampire is taken from the body. Once all the Vessel's Health Levels

Shelzza gazes down upon her King. His new life is about to begin.

have been taken, they face the Final Death, and their life-force is passed along to the character. If the Vessel was not of an earlier Generation, this does not mean very much. Such cannot be done with mortals, for their life force has already been extinguished by the time they lose all their Blood Points.

Each time a player character does this, you should require a Humanity roll of some sort, especially if the one who they had slain displayed any sort of good or noble tendencies.

Note: The Blood of many Elders is extremely potent. Often it can be used for a variety of purposes. It is said that it is even able to grant temporary capacity in one or more Disciplines when it is imbibed by a lesser Vampire. Though only one character can gain the benefit of the lowered effective Generation, the other characters involved can still use that Blood (perhaps even persevering some of it in vials) to invigorate themselves in other ways.

Blood Bond

Blood and Fire are too much for these restless arms to hold.
And my nights of desire are calling me back to your fold.
And I'm calling you, calling you from 10,000 miles away
Won't you wet my fire with your love, babe?

— Indigo Girls, *Blood and Fire*

It is possible to create a Blood Bond with another Vampire, thereby making them your servant, and in some ways, your lover. Blood Bond is also spoken of as holding Regnant over another, and one who holds it over the bonded Vampire is known as the Regent, whereas the one who is held in Regnant is commonly known as a Thrall. Almost invariably, it is the Elders who are Regent and Neonates who are Thralls. It is part of the Jyhad to hold many in Regnant, for it gives you retainers of power whom you can trust. For this reason, Blood Bond is sometimes known as Blood Oath.

Creation of the Bond

The Blood Bond is created by the exchange of Blood between two Vampires. The Thrall must drink of the Regent's Blood three different times, on three different occasions (on different days). It can be any amount of Blood; but a sip or even a taste if the Regent is of Ancient Blood. Unlike the limitations of the Dominate Discipline, it is possible for weaker Blood to hold Regnant over more potent Blood. Thus, a tenth Generation Kindred could hold Regnant over a ninth Generation Vampire.

The more times that Blood is taken, the more the Bond is reinforced. Most Regents have their Thralls drink of their Blood several times a year, just to make sure that it remains a potent bond. Many of them are fearful that if the Bond is broken, the Thrall will be full of vengeance and will plot against them. This is why most Thralls are fairly well-treated and paid respect (often false) by their Regent. Hate can build up beneath the power of the Bond and weaken it.

Once a Vampire has been Blood Bound, they cannot again be Bonded by another. You can only be Bound once, and are thus "safe" from it if you are already Bound. However, one can be Bound to a number of different Vampires if you drink of their Blood all at the same time, such as if it was mixed in a chalice before it was drunk. In fact, one of the most severe punishments of the Camarilla is to be forced to drink the Blood of all the Kindred attending a Conclave. Usually the feelings produced by such a wide spread Bonding are more diffused than normal, but they are no less powerful. The attachment is for the group and not any one individual. It is this diffusion of the attachment that is desired by the Tremere of their Neonates, and this is why they Bond them to seven Elders of the Clan. Though their style of Regnant tends to be more intellectual than most, it is a mighty Bond nevertheless.

Every character is already on their way to being Blood Bonded, for their Sire has already given them at least one taste of Blood. Thus, if the character partakes of their Sire's Blood two more times, they will be held in Regnant. In some cases, the character may already be held in Regnant by their Sire.

Power of the Bond

Bonding is primarily an emotional power. Thralls view the Vampire to whom they are Bonded as a central figure in their life and are invariably obsessed with them. Though they may despise their Regent, they will do nearly anything to aid him. They will do nothing to harm their Regent and will even attempt to protect him against others who might attack him. It is very likely that the character will understand what is happening to them, intellectually at least, but they will be unable to do anything about it.

It is like falling in love — once it happens you are caught in its grip until somehow you break free. You may know that you are in love, and hate what it makes you do, but that does not stop you from being in love and it doesn't prevent you from doing some of the stupid things that people in love sometimes do. Blood Bond is possibly the closest to that vaulted emotion that many Vampires can ever get. When roleplaying Blood Bond, use this "love" metaphor to understand just how deeply and completely your character is obsessed with their Regent. A Regent with a high conscience may feel this "love" to some measure in return.

One of the primary powers a Regent has over the Thrall is that she is able to Dominate the Thrall without requiring eye contact. As long as the Thrall is able to hear the words of the Regent, he can be Dominated. This is the only case where eye contact is not required for the Dominate Discipline. All difficulties are 2 higher whenever the Thrall makes a roll to resist the Domination of the Regent.

Blood Bond sometimes (but not always) gives the Regent insight into the mood and feelings of the Thrall,

they may Regent can intuitively find the Thrall simply by following her hunches.

Willpower may be expended to resist the power of the Blood Bond. Depending on the circumstances, a single Willpower point will eliminate the effects of the Bond for a single turn to an entire Scene. If the character simply wishes to plot against his Regent, one Willpower would enable him to do so for an entire Scene. However, if he wanted to actively attack his Regent, it would take at least one Willpower per turn, and the player would probably have to make a Willpower roll each turn just to get the nerve to spend that Willpower point.

If a character's Regent asks him to do her a favor, he will do so if it is at all possible. However, if it requires him to risk his life, he does not need to do it (and he doesn't have to spend a Willpower point). Even love is not that blind. However, if there is an emergency and the Regent is being attacked, the Thrall's first instinct will be to go to aid her. Self-sacrifice is not unknown, especially if the Bond has been reinforced over the years. If the Thrall is treated well, the Bond is reinforced and it grows stronger — if he is humiliated and degraded, the hate that will develop will diminish its influence on the Thrall.

It is possible to break a Blood Bond, but it can be difficult. It requires not only the massive expenditure of Willpower over a long period time, but also necessitates the character completely avoid his Regent. If a Thrall does not see the Regent for some time, and does not interact with the object of his attachment, the Bond will eventually die away. Some types of Natures, such as Childe and Fanatic, may never escape the Blood Bond, while others, such as Conniver or Loner, may do so very easily. The breaking of the Blood Bond of a character cannot be achieved through experience points or successful rolls, it must be roleplayed.

It is whispered that the Sabbat know of ways to break the Bond, but it is said that one must pledge to them before they will teach you of it. Whatever the case, those who most resent their bondage and retain the free-will to act independently will flee to the Sabbat — fearing less the Black Hand than their continued servitude under the Domination of an Elder.

See the world as it used to be
When you used to be in it
When you were alive and when you were in love
And when I took it from you.
I won't let you forget
The hatred I bestowed
Upon your neck with a fatal blow.

— Faith No More, *Surprise! You're Dead*

The Embrace

Creating a Vampire is a very simple process. To become a Vampire, one must first lose all of one's mortal blood. The Sire typically sucks all of the blood away, leaving only a dry corpse. Within five minutes, however (or possibly even longer, depending on the Potence of the Sire's Blood), the Sire must return some measure of Blood to the corpse. Often this is done out of pity, sometimes because of a careful plan, other times as a means of revenge. Once the corpse takes but a drop of Blood, the mortal will revive slightly and begin to drink. One full Blood Point must be taken for the ritual to work completely.

The Embrace may either be excruciatingly painful or extremely arousing. It varies from case to case. Once the ritual is completed, the newly created Fledgling is usually ravenously hungry — unless the Sire returned to them a great amount of Blood (which is unusual). Sometimes all of the Blood that is given to the Neonate is used up in the transformation from the world of the dead to the world of the undead. This hunger is often the most unexpected and most unpleasant aspect of the Embrace.

However, a Kindred cannot simply create a Neonate, at least not without getting into serious trouble. The permission of the Prince is required, unless the Prince is so weak that he cannot enforce this Tradition. Some Clans require their members to seek the permission of the Clan as well.

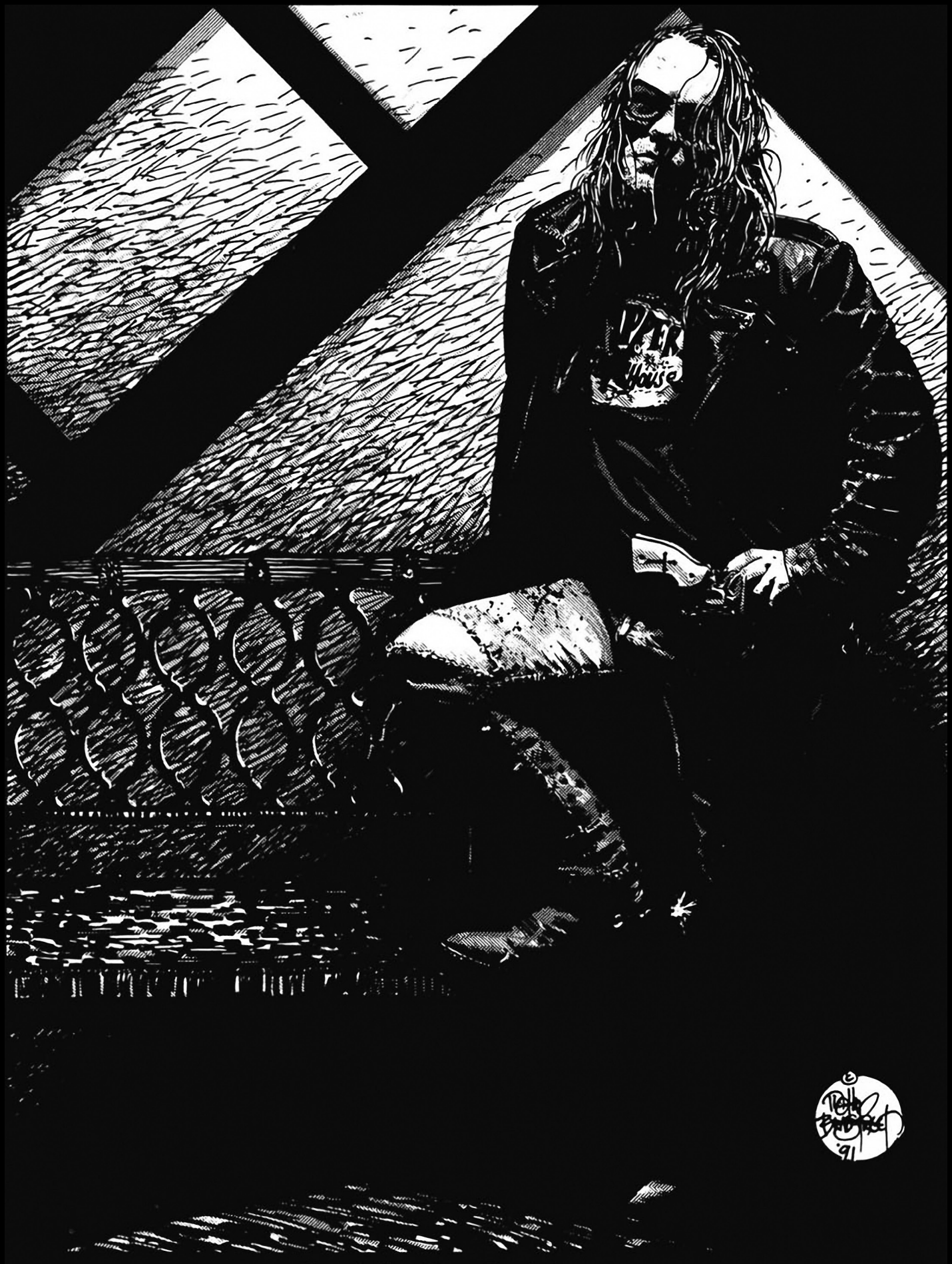
Ghouls

A mortal who drinks the Blood of a Vampire, but who has not first been drained, becomes a Ghoul. They do not age as long as they feed on Vampiric Blood regularly, and may even have some of the special powers of a Vampire, but they can go about in the daylight and are not especially susceptible to fire. Such Ghouls do not even need to be human, animals can be changed as well (but generally the Discipline Animalism is needed in order to control them).

Vampires create such creatures regularly, as a means of creating loyal servants who are able to protect them during the day. Some Kindred use Ghouls to perform evil deeds against others of their kind during the daylight hours.

Permission is required from the Prince in order to create a Ghoul, or so the Council of the Camarilla has ruled, for it breaks the restrictions of the Masquerade. If the 'Sire' is in the good graces of the Prince, then this is not a major concern as most Princes do not concern themselves with the creation of Ghouls, as long as it is kept under control. Creating a Ghoul is not considered to be breaking the Masquerade as long as the Ghoul does not tell others what he knows. In any case, Ghouls are told very little and are too fearful of their masters to relay much information.

Ghouls can become Blood Bound to their masters just as can Vampires. Thus, after three feedings, the Ghoul is inexorably Bound to the Master. However, if the Ghoul spends more than a month without receiving Blood from his master, then they cease to be Blood Bound, for they have become fully mortal once again.



Brujah (brōō’ - jä)

Chapter Six: Drama

That which does not kill us, makes us stronger.

— Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche

There are many actions that a player might want her character to take during a turn — jump a fence, seduce a new acquaintance, or research Werewolves in the library. Though you already know the rules (from reading Chapter two), and could probably figure out how to adjudicate the player's roll, there are a few techniques and variations on the rules that you might be interested in. That's what this Chapter is all about — it provides advice on rules systems for resolving actions. Various character actions are described, such as swimming, seduction and research, and interesting methods for resolving players' rolls as well as roleplaying through them are provided.

This is a Chapter of permutations, not rules. There is *nothing* contained in the next several pages that you *need* to know, but a few things that you might want to know about. Neither is this Chapter meant to be all-inclusive. These actions are meant only to be examples of how you can resolve the actions taken by the players. Use these as examples and make your own systems for running things if you'd like. In the middle of a dramatic Scene, don't stop the action to look up something in this Chapter — just make up something, perhaps based on a rules system which you first encountered herein.

Only if a roll is truly called for should you use one of the systems described in this Chapter. If it is a simple roll, then none of these systems is needed. If you're not interested in the drama created through putting *game* into the *story*, use the automatic success rules. Go to the Traits chapter and just by reading about the Trait in question, figure out if the player is successful or not, without even rolling any dice. You may not want to roll dice if you don't have to — they can really get in the way. However, there are occasions when rolling dice can add tension and suspense, as Lady Luck makes her appearance.

Even beyond the roleplaying business, as a general rule, have the players make a roll only when there is substantial doubt in your mind as to whether the character will succeed in their action or not. If you can reasonably assume they will succeed, then just let them do it — don't worry about the rules or any dumb rolls. Use the automatic success rules as often as you can, and you'll have a better game as a result.

When you do start making rolls and have the players do the same, make it special and make it different. Don't waste a lot of time when it doesn't do anything special for the story, or is not interesting for you or the players. Make each time you bother to roll the dice a game in miniature, almost like you're playing backgammon right in the middle of the roleplaying, with strategy and tactics to master, luck to foul things up, and opponents to squash.

Scenes

No one move a muscle as the dead come home.

— Shriekback, *Nemesis*

A Scene is a moment in a story when you focus on the events happening at hand, and roleplay them through as if they were really occurring. This may involve only roleplaying and a lot of conversation between the players and the Storyteller (who are all "in character"), but may also involve a number of different actions, some of them requiring the rolling of dice. If it is more game than roleplaying, then it is called an Action Scene (which is discussed below).

A Scene is like a series of shots taken in a movie in the same location and at the same moment in the story. It is the real gist of the roleplaying, the time when the players are actively in their roles and are able to describe their characters' reactions to events rather than explanations of things they intend to do.

You should do everything you can to make the Scenes in your story as dramatic, complete and fulfilling as possible. The better you can give each Scene an exciting start, an action-packed middle, and a fulfilling end (or a strategically frustrating one), the better your story will be.

Describe the Scene not as a static picture, but as a place or time that is full of life and action. It should seem like it has its own existence apart from the characters. The gang leader is not simply sitting at a table — while the characters are watching he calls over one of his henchmen and begins to berate him. Create an open-ended story in your descriptions and them invite the players to enter it. Don't force the players to add the life to your creation — breathe life into it from the very first moment.

Kyle struggles to keep his mouth open and catch the tiny red beads that fall from heaven toward him.

Any time during the story that is not spent in a Scene is called Downtime. This can be when the players are doing extensive research, are traveling, or simply don't want to bother roleplaying through everything second by second. Downtime is a break from the intensity of the Scene, and you should plan to make Downtime a part of the story whenever possible because of this. Though normally you want to spend as little time as possible in Downtime (generally it's relatively boring), you shouldn't avoid it altogether. Use Downtime to organize players, direct the story more precisely, and progress the plot more quickly.

The story can turn into a Scene at almost any time. Often it does so quite naturally without anyone realizing it has happened. For instance, while you discuss with the players how they intend to make a journey to Chicago, you may begin to describe what they see along the way. You have gone from Downtime to a Scene. When you begin roleplaying an old man who comes up to them and asks for change, you have completely taken them into the Scene. By simply beginning roleplaying without warning, you jumpstart the players into getting out of the player mode and into their roles, instantly beginning a Scene.

Turns

A Scene is divided into turns in order to organize and structure the arrangement of events. A turn is a varying period of time in which characters can do things. It helps you keep track of what is going on and makes sure that each player gets the same chance to do something. **In *one* turn, every character should be able to do *one* thing.** Additionally, each player should be given about the same amount of time to describe what she wants her character to do. Go around the table in from lowest to highest initiative and give each player an opportunity to take an action, and then go to the next person. When you get to yourself, let the non-player characters take actions. Go around the table once more when the next turn starts, again in the order from lowest to highest initiative.

Even if it might not make complete sense, you should use the turn structure pretty loosely. You might let someone climb a tree while someone else fires a gunshot, even though in normal circumstances climbing a tree usually takes a minute, while shooting the gun takes only three seconds. Adrenalin can make people do amazing things, after all.

Multiple Actions:

You can perform multiple actions in a turn (such as running and shooting a gun), but unless you have the Discipline Celerity, you've got to divide up your dice. You can only roll as many total dice in the turn as you have for the action with which you have the least number of dice. If you want to both climb a tree and shoot a gun, and you have 5 dice for climbing and 4 dice for shooting a gun, then you

get 4 dice to divide between the two actions. You may elect to roll 2 dice for each, or you could put 1 die on climbing and 3 dice on firing the gun.

If you want to move while taking other actions in a turn (such as firing your gun), you may do so simply by taking away one die from the number you are rolling for every yard you move. Movement is already considered in the rules for dodging, so no extra penalty is accrued to characters who are diving for cover.

Action Scenes

I'd like to kiss you, let my lips caress you
Sending sparks of passion up your spine.
But doing so means saying no and even
The thought would be a crime.

— Living Colour, *Under Cover of Darkness*

Many Scenes are so full of actions and the rolling of dice that they require special rules to make sure that everything runs smoothly. These are times when the adrenalin is racing and the pacing is fast. Action Scenes are the fights, races and feats of danger so common in adventure-type stories. During an Action Scene, the turns are usually very short, lasting only 3 seconds or so. Most of the systems described in this chapter occur during action Scenes, using action turns.

There are many different types of actions that can occur in an Action Scene, and correlating everything can seem a little tricky. Let a character do nearly anything he cares to try, but make sure that it doesn't seem too silly. But at least let him try, even if you do assign a 10 difficulty.

Make sure that you carefully describe where everyone is in the Scene as well as what cover is available and how far it is from the characters. Otherwise, you'll have to describe the Scene over again and hear complaints like, "Wait a minute, you didn't say anyone was over there!" You may also want to describe the conditions and how they might affect the combat. Rain, wind and smoke can affect many rolls.

Organizing an Action Turn

Just as turns are the ways to organize a Scene, there are different stages of each action turn. You will probably not need to divide up turns, unless they are Action Turns. Though you need not go by these stages exactly, look this list over to get ideas on how you can organize things when the action gets hot. The better you've got it organized, the more smoothly it's going to go and the more fun everyone is going to have.

• **Describing the Scene:** At the beginning of each turn, you should describe the Scene from the character's perspective. You may want to suggest here what the opponents of the character might be intending to do, but don't actually describe to them what is going on. Sometimes this will be a wrap-up of the last turn, making it clear to all the players what occurred. This sort of constant redescription is essential if you want to avoid confusion.

This is your chance to organize and arrange things so that when the players begin to interact with what you have set up, all will go smoothly. You will want to make your description as interesting as possible, leaving open all sorts of possibilities for actions to be taken by the characters.

Each player will need to roll for Initiative. This determines the order in which the characters will get to act. In especially complicated situations, you can have each player describe to you, lowest initiatives first, what they intend to do that turn. This statement of intent can help you clarify in your own mind what is going on, but it slows things down, so avoid it if you can. If you wish to be particularly free-spirited, then you can eliminate the initiative roll altogether and have the players act in whatever order you wish.

e.g. "In the distance you hear sirens, and you notice that the street punk at the end of the alley seems to have noticed them as well. Okay, he wins the initiative and sprints towards the fence. What are you going to do?"

• **Decision Stage:** For each player in turn, going by individual areas of action (by each subgroup), allow them to undertake whatever action they have chosen. Go in order of initiative, if you have had them make initiative rolls. Otherwise simply go around the table from left to right, or whatever consistent way you want to do it. In this stage, the players get to specifically explain what they intend to do and how then intend to go about it. Then you decide how you want to resolve it — what kind of roll the player will make, the difficulty they need to get, as well the number of successes they might need. You can make it as simple or complicated as you like.

e.g. If you want to catch him before he gets over the fence, you need to make a Dexterity + Athletics roll. You need to get 6 successes to catch up with him, he only needs 3 more to get over the fence."

• **Resolution Stage:** This is when you actually have the players start to make their rolls, in order to see whether their characters succeed or fail. The players roll their dice for the round, attempting the action they described in the preceding stage, and using up all or some of their Dice Pool.

At the end of the turn, you need to sum everything up by describing what happened and translating all the dice rolls in description, plot and story. Don't simply say "You manage

to hit the bad guy for 3 levels of damage," instead get more graphic and say "After ducking away to the left, you sweep across with your fist and strike him alongside the head. Your hand stings, but you've knocked him down 3 levels."

e.g. "Well you did it, amazingly enough. Next round you will be able to make a grab at him before he gets completely away. However, you see a police cruiser pull in around the corner of the alley."

Rolling Initiative

At the start of most Scenes, you will want to figure out who gets to go first. Rolling for Initiative is the best way to decide in what order players will go for the remainder of the fight. Sometimes it will be obvious who goes first, such as when an ambush was set or one person is clearly caught by surprise. In combat, however, if you intend to let the opponents have a free shot at the characters, it's best not to just spring it on the players. Let them make Perception rolls (hard ones) to see if they notice something just before the bad guys open up. Otherwise, you'll have a pack of whining jackals on your hands. The difficulty is dependent on how well the ambush was set, usually 8 or so. The number of successes the players make indicates the number of dice they can roll on their first roll, usually a dodge.

In a normal situation, each player makes an Initiative roll, and you do so for each of the opponents. Everyone involved makes a Wits + Alertness roll (or you can have them use Brawl, Melee, Firearms or any appropriate Ability). The difficulty is usually 4 — characters with the most successes go first and ties go simultaneously. Failure only indicates that you go last. A botch on an Initiative roll indicates the loss of one dice from your Dice Pool for that turn, besides having to go after everybody who didn't botch.

In future turns, you can have everyone roll again, or you can simply keep the same order of Initiative that was determined in the first turn. We suggest the latter, since constant dice rolls can be tedious.

Taking Actions

As soon as Initiative has been determined, have the person with the highest Initiative tell you what she intends to do. Then before anyone else does anything, resolve that action. The player must decide what she wants to do, whether she wants to fire, dodge, or perform some other action, she may even wish to enter into melee (see the Melee section for details). A player may also decide to split their Dice Pool (see the rules at the start of the chapter).

The three basic actions that characters can take, which do not require rolls, include:

• **Yield:** You allow the person with the next highest Initiative to take their action, thereby yielding your turn. You can still take your action at the end of the turn. If everyone, including your opponents, yield as well, then all of you do nothing that turn.

• **Heal:** You can decide to do nothing but use a Blood Point to heal yourself. In one turn, one Health Level can be restored, but no other action can be taken. Blood Points can be used to enhance a Physical Attribute, while still performing other actions.

• **Move:** The character moves by walking, jogging or running. If they are walking, they may move 7 yards. If they are jogging, they may move 12 yards + Dexterity. If they are running, they may move 25 yards + Dexterity. No roll is required, but this movement is the only action they can perform in that turn. In some situations, it can be hazardous to jog or run, and a roll might be required to maintain your balance, for instance, when there is glass on the ground or bullets are raining down. If you want to run away from the conflict or encounter, you'll need to Dodge unless you are not in the field of fire, or hindered in any way.

There are all sorts of other actions that can be made, all of which require a roll:

- **Attack:** You may decide to fire your weapon or bite someone. For instance, a Firearms attack requires a Dexterity + Firearms roll.
- **Climb a wall:** Requires a Dexterity + Athletics roll.
- **Charge Enemy:** You'd better have a high Dodge to survive those bullets.
- **Crowd Control:** Clear away a crowd with the Presence Discipline.
- **Dodge:** A Dodge not only allows a character to avoid the bullets, but gets them out of the field of fire. They can make the roll right after someone tries to shoot them, thereby getting the chance to get out of the way.
- **Dive for cover:** requires a Dodge roll.
- **Get to your Feet:** In order to get up from the ground without having to make a roll, it takes you a turn. If you want to do this as part of your other actions, you would have to take dice from your announced action in an attempt to get at least one success, difficulty of at least 4.
- **Leadership:** Give commands to followers.
- **Reload a clip:** Your Dexterity + Firearms Dice Pool equals the number of bullets that can be reloaded per turn.
- **Reload Gun:** Can be done in a single turn only if you have a preloaded clip.
- **Research:** You try to look up a vital piece of information in a book. Though this would likely take longer than 3 seconds, in the interests of drama, you may wish to lighten up the reality a little bit.
- **Start a car:** Doesn't need a roll at all, unless you are hotwiring it.

- **Sneak up on enemy:** Requires a Stealth roll.
- **Unjam Gun:** Can normally be performed in a single turn, unless it was a particularly bad botch.

Simple Rolls

The one thing about living in Santa Carla that I never could stomach, is all the damn Vampires.

— Grandpa, *The Lost Boys*

Many rolls made during a dramatic Scene are simple rolls. However, most of the systems described in this chapter are complicated rolls — variations of extended and resisted rolls. Following are some examples of simple rolls, to provide you with some ideas on how to incorporate them into your action Scenes. Please note that each Attribute can work with each Trait, so there are 270 potential types of simple rolls that can be made. Admittedly, you will not often roll Stamina + Computers, but it might come up — you never know.

• In order to convince the Elder that you actually did notice the Brujah creeping up from behind you, roll Manipulation + Alertness to see if you can explain what happened in enough detail to get her to believe you (difficulty 8). You'll need three successes to completely convince her.

• You are standing watch while your companions catch a few hours of sleep. Make an Alertness + Stamina roll to see how awake and alert you are when intruders finally approach in the late afternoon (difficulty 7). Remember, you can't roll more dice than your Humanity rating because it's daytime.

• An initiate of the Sabbat is creeping up behind you. Roll Perception + Alertness to see if you notice his approach (difficulty 9).

• A tough street punk refuses to take your commands. Roll Strength + Leadership in an attempt to physically dominate him and get him to do what you say.

• Can you convince the crowd of mortals to do as you have asked? Roll Charisma + Leadership as you attempt to give an off-the-cuff speech (difficulty 7). You'll need four successes to completely convince them.

• Your arch-rival is giving a speech to the Council of the Camarilla. Roll Perception + Leadership to get an idea of how good a leader she is (difficulty 6). If you somehow get 5 successes, you'll know her exact rating.

• By showing off your "moves," you try to convince your opponent to back off. Roll Manipulation + Brawl (difficulty 6). One success will only make him pause a turn, and you can try this action only once...

• You go out on the street and try to gather some information about the new gang that has moved into the projects. Roll Streetwise + Manipulation (difficulty 8). The more successes you get, the more you know. It takes a whole evening to get the info.

• After being questioned for hours, you roll Acting + Stamina to see if you can maintain your story successfully (difficulty 8). Five successes and you'll finally convince them completely.

• You threaten the young man by trying to lift him up by his collar. Roll Strength + Intimidation (difficulty 8).

• Yelling and screaming at the taxi driver, you try to get him to drive even faster. Roll Charisma + Intimidation (difficulty 6).

• You ask a series of rapid-fire questions in order to discover what threats will intimidate the subject. Roll Wits + Intimidation (difficulty 6).

• Do you notice the old lady pulling the gun out of her purse in time to Dodge out of the way? Roll Perception + Dodge (difficulty 6).

• You want to make a good impression at Modius' party. Roll Appearance + Etiquette.

• You stand watch over the sleeping Antediluvian for hours and try to pick up something of what he is feeling and thinking. Roll Stamina + Empathy (difficulty 6).

• You attempt to use what you know about human feelings to calm the crazed woman down. If you can understand the meaning of that strange expression on her face, perhaps you

The blood melts away as it strikes his tongue. Small tremors of life wrack his body.

can stop her from screaming. Roll Manipulation + Empathy (difficulty 6).

• In order to stop the motor from blowing up, you've got to wrench out the steam pipe from the pneumatic drum. Roll Strength + Repair (difficulty 6).

• You try to decipher what's wrong with the car engine from the strange sounds it is making. Roll Perception + Repair (difficulty 6).

• Reining in the terrified horses takes a lot of force and expertise. Roll Strength + Animal Ken (difficulty 9).

• You attempt to decipher why the ravens are crying so loudly and suddenly. Roll Intelligence + Animal Ken (difficulty 9).

• Do you spot the tracks of the Lupine? Roll Perception + Survival (difficulty 6).

• You try to motion to the truck driver to pull over by pointing at his wheels and pretending to yell something out the window. Roll Manipulation + Drive (difficulty 4).

• Suddenly, the man pushes a crate out of the van you have been chasing — roll Wits + Drive to see if you can avoid hitting it (difficulty 6).

• The Prince of Chicago, Lodin, makes a specific request for a song. Do you know the one he is asking for? Roll Intelligence + Music.

• How long can you remain motionless in the bushes as the two guards small talk for hours on end? Roll Stamina + Stealth (difficulty 7). Each success is an hour.

• You search through the grounds of Johann's mansion and try to spot someone hiding in the bushes. Roll Perception + Stealth (difficulty 9). It takes you 10 minutes to complete the action.

• How flawlessly do you conduct yourself at the formal dinner at La Omini (even though you can't actually eat anything...)? Roll Dexterity + Etiquette (difficulty 8).

• You attempt to convince the clerk of the court that you really are the EPA inspector, and need to see the court records. Roll Manipulation + Bureaucracy (difficulty 8).

• You try to follow the intricate paper trail to the company who manufactured the biological contaminants in the first place. Roll Intelligence + Bureaucracy (difficulty 9).

• You question the doorman to discover how much he remembers about the visitors to Ms. McClain's apartment last night. Roll Charisma + Investigation (difficulty 4). You need five successes to get all the info.

• Is the doorman lying about what he remembers? Roll Perception + Investigation (difficulty 7).

• You need to add precisely 2.3 mg of Nitrous Oxide to the solution, no less, no more. Roll Dexterity + Science.

• You try to convince the FBI agents that you really weren't involved with the hackers who broke into the Southern

She marvels at his struggle for life and recalls her Embrace with him so long ago.

Bell computer. Roll Manipulation + Computers (difficulty 10). But they confiscate your computer regardless of what you roll.

• You foolishly attempt to break into the Southern Bell computers. Roll Intelligence + Computer (difficulty 3) to realize what a lost cause it is.

• The ritual takes three days to complete. Can you stay awake for 72 hours? Roll Stamina + Occult (difficulty 8).

• You try to dredge up everything you know about crystals in order to impress the New Agers in the yogurt bar. Roll Charm + Occult (difficulty 6).

• You try to slip out of your handcuffs (good luck!). Roll Dexterity + Streetwise (difficulty 10).

• You try to explain who broke into the store to the officer without incriminating yourself. Roll Manipulation + Law (difficulty 6).

• What language is she speaking? Roll Intelligence + Linguistics to figure it out (difficulty 6).

The Systems

There is only one step from the sublime to the ridiculous.

— Napolean I, *after the retreat from Moscow*.

Described below are a variety of different systems for the resolution of actions, or, to put it simply, a bunch of ways to make rolls. If you prefer to roleplay through dramatic Scenes, just use these systems to get ideas on what sorts of things can happen during the Scene.

Remember these are only *examples* of how you can do things in your Chronicle. If you don't like the way the Firefight system works, then change it. Either make it more complicated or simplify it — do whatever turns you on. Don't think that these rules are written in stone, because they're not. They were written for you to use and abuse as you see fit. In the **Storytellers Handbook**, we describe a huge number of different systems, some of them as alternatives to the ones you'll find here.

Physical

Awakenings

Often a character will need to wake up in the middle of the day. This is extremely difficult for Vampires to do, as they are highly nocturnal creatures. When something occurs while they are asleep that may require the character to rouse, a Perception + Auspex roll must be made (difficulty of 8). Any success indicates that they awaken enough to notice what is going on. Failure indicates they don't wake up yet, while a botch indicates they won't wake up at all.

Once the character is slightly roused, a Humanity roll is made to see how long they can remain awake. The difficulty is normally an 8 and each success indicates that the character can stay awake for one turn. Five successes means they awaken completely. No actions can be taken until the character is completely awake. A failure means they go back to sleep, but if something else happens which might rouse them, they can roll again. A botch means that they go back to sleep and nothing will rouse them.

Throughout the rest of the time the character is awake, you may require them to make Humanity rolls to see if they can remain awake. The difficulty of this roll is also 8, but only one success is needed for them to remain awake. Failures and botches have the same results as they do above.

Remember, during the day no roll made by a Vampire can use more dice than the Vampire's Humanity.

Climbing

Though humans have to use their arms and legs to climb, Vampires have other means of scaling walls, not the least of which is to simply jump up to where they want to go. For normal climbing, use the system below, otherwise go to the Jumping system. Some powerful Vampires can shapeshift into a bat and simply fly.

When a character attempts to climb any sort of surface (a tree, cliff or building), ask the player to roll their Dexterity + Athletics. If the character has the Protean power of claws, then an additional die may be rolled. The difficulty is dependent on the sheerness of the climbing surface and the type of surface being climbed, and to a lesser extent, the weather conditions. Each success indicates that they have climbed five feet. Once they have accumulated enough successes to get where they want to go, they can stop rolling. For example, Malcolm is trying to climb a 25 foot tall wall, so he needs 5 successes to get to the top. A complete failure indicates that the character was not able to make any progress this turn. A botch indicates that the character falls and cannot attempt to climb again without expending a Willpower point (fear is a complicated emotion).

Difficulties

Two: Easy climb: a tree with many stout branches
Four: Simple climb: cliff with many handholds
Six: Straight forward: a tree with thin branches
Eight: Treacherous: very few handholds
Ten: Extremely difficult, a nearly sheer surface

The Hunt

One of the most important things in a Vampire's life is obtaining blood. When you don't wish to roleplay out the hunt for food, this system allows for a fairly rapid way to determine how much blood is obtained and if there are any complications.

For each hour that the player decides to spend on searching, give her one die. Using these dice, a roll is made and the difficulty is determined by the neighborhood, see the chart below.

Area	*Difficulty*
Slum Neighborhood	4
Lower Class	5
Heavily Patrolled	8
Suburb	7
Downtown	6
Warehouse District	6

A success indicates that the character was successful in tracking down prey and is able to feed for one die worth of blood (roll one die and the result is how many Blood Points you receive from your nocturnal prowlings). No Humanity is lost, blood is only gained. A failure indicates that no blood was obtained, while a botch of any sort indicates a complication.

Though the blood is gone, the dream continues and Kyle is lost in a world his mind creates but cannot possibly understand.

After a botch, you immediately go into roleplaying mode, starting at the point where things start to go wrong. The Storyteller describes the Scene and relates to the player what happened up to the point where the hunt went awry. Then the player has to figure out how to get out of trouble. Complications can become very hairy.

If you simply don't have time for roleplaying, tell them they manage to feed. But later on, let them learn that they contract some sort of disease, which will cause them great grief.

After the feeding begins, a Frenzy roll is sometimes required, to see if the character can hold back from gouging and harming the Vessel. If the character has 3 Blood Points or less when they begin feeding, then a Frenzy roll is required (roll Conscience). See the Frenzy rules in the Development chapter for more details.

Jumping

When a player announces they want to make a jump, have them make a Strength roll. If it is a horizontal jump and the character can make a decent running start, then allow them to make a Strength + Athletics roll. The difficulty for jumping is almost always a 3 (unless there are difficult weather conditions or there is a narrow landing space). The Storyteller calculates how many successes will be required in order to make the jump. The number of successes required is based on the number of feet that need to be jumped, which is dependent on whether the character is jumping horizontally or vertically (see the chart below). There are no partial successes in jumping; you either get it in one roll, or you fail and fall.

Type of Jump	**Feet Per success**
Vertical (up)	2
Horizontal (across)	4

A failure or a botch indicates that the character falls, trips or for some reason fails. If it was only a failure, you could give the player a second chance by having the player make a Dexterity + Athletics roll to see if he can grab onto the ledge, etc. However, a botch is always a complete failure — you fall. The wounds sustained by falls are discussed in the Injuries section of the Development chapter, page 120.

If the player makes a Perception + Athletics roll before they make the jump (average difficulty of 8) and receives at least one success, then you can tell them how many successes they will need in order to make the jump. You should actually make the Perception roll, so that they are not certain of how accurate their estimation was.

Vampires are able to jump much further than normal humans because of their ability to use Blood Points. When a

Vampire uses Blood Points, he can get additional successes. A character's Potence rating, if they have it, also counts as that many automatic successes in jumping maneuvers.

Feats of Strength

Often a character's Strength is used alone, without an Ability, in actions where brute Strength is all that matters. Of course, the Discipline of Potence can be added to the Strength roll. This system works on the same basis as automatic successes. If the character's Dice Pool (from Strength + Potence) is equal to or greater than the task they are attempting, they get to do it automatically. Only if the task is higher than their Dice Pool must they make a roll. Blood Points used on Strength of course raise this maximum.

When the player makes the roll, however, it is Willpower that is used, not Strength. It is a simple roll, so he gets only one chance to make it. The difficulty is almost always a 9, though it can vary according to the surface conditions, the wieldiness of the object being lifted, and your whim. It is the number of successes that is important. Each success pushes the character up one on the chart below (to a maximum of five steps up). Thus if you had a four Strength, but wanted to flip over a car, you would need three successes on your Willpower roll to be able to do it. So it might make more sense to wait three turns and use Blood Points.

Dice Pool	Feats	Lift
1:	Crush a beer can	20 lbs
2:	Break a chair	50 lbs
3:	Break down a wooden door	150 lbs
4:	Break a 2 × 4 board	250 lbs
5:	Break open a metal fire door	500 lbs
6:	Throw a motorcycle	700 lbs
7:	Flip over a car	900 lbs
8:	Break three inch lead pipe	1000 lbs
9:	Punch through a cement wall	1200 lbs
10:	Rip open a steel drum	1500 lbs
11:	Punch through 1" sheet metal	2000 lbs
12:	Break a metal lamp post	3000 lbs
13:	Throw a car	4000 lbs

Repair

Getting something fixed is not always as easy as taking it to the garage; sometimes you've got to do it yourself. When characters wish to fix any sort of mechanical implement, they have to roll Dexterity + Repair. The difficulty is determined by the complexity of the task (see the chart below). Before the job can be considered completed, a certain number of successes must be collected, usually it is between 3 and 20. Each roll means that a certain amount of time was spent, whatever the demands of the story require. A botch indicates that the device was somehow damaged in the attempt.

This system can be fun to use during combat — one character desperately tries to start the car while the others hold off the pack of Ghouls.

Job	Difficulty	# of Successes
Simple mechanical repair	4	3
Soldering job	5	2
Electronic malfunction	5	5
Fitting in new part	6	10
Repair stalled car	6	5
Tough auto repair	7	10
Technical glitch	9	2
System overhaul	8	20

Sneak

When characters attempt to hide in shadows or sneak up on a guard, have them roll Dexterity + Stealth. The difficulty is the guard's Perception + Alertness. The guard can be considered anyone who is on watch or who is actively looking for intruders. If more than one person is able to see the area where the character is sneaking, then take the individual with the highest Perception.

The more successes you roll, the further the character moves. Each success indicates that a certain number of feet have been moved, often five feet, but that can vary a great deal depending on terrain, proximity to guard, weather conditions, and the needs of the story (see the chart below).

The character needs to collect a certain number of successes in order to make it to where they want to go. A Perception + Stealth roll can be made if the player wants to find out how many successes will be needed; the difficulty for this is usually 7.

Variables	Feet Moved per Success
Crawling	3
Inside	3
Many guards	3
No cover	3
Heavy cover	7
Guards far away	10

Shadowing

Sometimes the characters (or their enemies) will want to follow someone. In order to be led somewhere interesting, this needs to be done as discreetly as possible. That is what shadowing is all about — following someone without them knowing you are there.

There are two components to shadowing — keeping track of where the subject is and making sure they don't see you. Shadowing can be conducted on foot or in vehicles. Rolls can even be made if someone else is driving, such as a taxi driver — "I'm sorry, but I can't remember the address, you'll just have to follow my directions. Take a right at the corner. No wait, a left!"

Have the character who is attempting to shadow make a Perception + Investigation (or possibly Streetwise) roll. The difficulty is normally a 6 (though it can vary from 5 to 9 depending on the thickness of the crowds, speed of vehicles and weather conditions). Each success indicates that the character has been followed for a turn. A certain number of successes is required to follow the character all the way to where they are going. A failure indicates that the player has temporarily lost the subject, but they can try again next turn. If they get a second failure, they have lost the subject completely and the chase is off (unless they can come up with a new approach). A botch indicates that not only did they completely lose the subject, but they were so involved in shadowing that they got into some trouble of their own — a gang tries to beat them up, they fall into an open manhole, or they get into a car accident.

Though the Perception roll is the most important aspect of shadowing, a Stealth roll must also be made to see if the subject notices that he is being followed. Each turn the Perception roll is made, the Stealth roll must be made as well. Have the player roll Dexterity + Stealth (or Dexterity + Drive if they are in a vehicle).

The difficulty is the subject's Perception + Alertness, but it can be modified by +/- 3, depending on the circumstances (empty streets or thick crowds for instance). A single success indicates that the shadower was not detected, and each success also makes it more difficult for the subject to spot the shadower, even if they are actively looking. A failure indicates that the subject becomes suspicious and starts to watch out for who is behind them (and may make Perception rolls of their own, see below). A botch indicates that the character completely reveals himself and that the subject now *knows* he is being followed.

If the subject is alerted somehow (by the shadower's failure on the Dexterity + Stealth roll above), or simply looks to see if they are being followed (out of habit perhaps), then roll Perception + Investigation (or Streetwise). The difficulty is the Stealth + 5 of the character who is doing the shadowing. Each success on this roll indicates a higher degree of suspicion. Successes can be accumulated from turn to turn. See the chart below to see how alert the character is to the fact that they are being followed. A failure means

Incapable of any thought but the need for rest, Kyle crawls beside the unnamed woman who has destroyed his life.

they don't see anything and the suspicion value of the subject decreases to zero. A botch indicates they they are convinced they aren't being followed and no longer look behind them.

Successes	Suspicion
One	hunch
Two	suspicion
Three	certainty
Four	sure-knowledge
Five	you've spotted who's shadowing you

Buddy System: Two or more characters can share shadowing responsibilities by trading off. However, they must have worked/trained together on this in the past, or the difficulty on all rolls for them is one higher. One player shadows for a turn or more, and then trades off whenever they give the signal. If they switch off, the subject can't accumulate successes, which makes it much harder for the subject to spot them

Swimming

Although total immersion in water is not fatal to Vampires, it is not very pleasant. Because Vampires do not breath, they cannot drown. However, they can sink.

Any Vampire immersed in water without any means of support must roll Dexterity + Athletics with the difficulty determined by the severity of the water conditions. The number of successes obtained determines how far they swim (or alternatively, how long they have stayed above water). Normally it is five feet or five minutes, but that can vary according to the needs of the story. A botch means the character has lost ground (the current pulls you along or the tide pulls you back).

If Vampires are caught underwater during the day, they can be harmed by the sun's rays — water is no barrier (treat as the same as a cloudy day). If you get deep enough however, the sunlight will not penetrate, but at that depth the character might be crushed or suffer the effects of the cold temperature.

Hand-to-Hand

This system describes hand-to-hand combat — combat without guns. It can incorporate wrestling, fisticuffs, broken bottles, claws, teeth, swords, clubs and, yes, the wooden stake. You need to be within one or two yards of your opponent in order to be able to engage in hand-to-hand combat.

• Describing the Scene: When players are in a situation where melee is possible or likely, be sure to describe what is happening so that they realize what their options are.

Combat

*The **Vampire** combat systems are different in both tone and feel to what you might be used to. It is not a slugfest or a number crunching calculator frenzy. We have tried to capture the flavor of dramatic fire combat, and that means both realistic damage (if you get hit, it hurts) and a duck-then-fire pace.*

In a Vampire firefight, it is unwise to stand in the middle of the street to shoot at your opponent — you should always dive for cover first and then return fire. As with real firefights, cover is of preeminent concern. You move from cover to cover as you advance, using your friends to lay down suppressive fire as you advance. When you have a chance to dive out of the way of a barrage of bullets (by rolling Dodge), you do so. Even for Vampires, it is stupid to stand out in the open and let yourself get shot full of holes.

We have made every effort to create systems that are true to the dynamics and limitations of real gun combat, while still allowing for the unique elements that Vampires bring to it (care to fight someone who can walk directly into your line of fire?). Our Firefight rules were "meticulously" researched and playtested using Splat Ball guns in both forest and urban settings.

Accordingly, these combat systems are brutally realistic, quite deadly (even for Vampires) and very fast. Luck plays an important role, but strategy and tactics are central to success and the capabilities of the characters are primary. You need all three to win, much less survive.

As you read the rules for hand-to-hand, you will start to understand how this system works. When you play it out, you've got to remember how it is different and change some of your habits — otherwise you're going to bite the bullet.

Tactics:

• In this system, being able to creep up behind someone and shoot them from the rear is highly advantageous, for it denies them cover.

• Try to get a crossfire, because that limits the cover your opponents might be able to get, and it might chase them from areas where they can return fire.

• Have your allies use suppressive fire to cover you when you advance on the enemy. This makes them keep their heads down, and unable to fire as well. Who knows, with enough sustained fire you might convince them to keep their heads completely down.

• Against other Vampires, you need to move in and engage them in hand-to-hand, because your teeth and claws (if you have them) cause aggravated wounds. It's the only way to take them out for good.

It is not usually necessary for combatants in hand-to-hand combat to roll Initiative.

• **Determination Stage:** Go to each player and ask them what they want to do. There are three hand-to-hand maneuvers a character can perform — Strike, Throw and Grapple. A character may also elect to make a Dodge roll (see the options below).

• **Resolution Stage:** The two matched opponents each roll Dexterity + Brawl (or Melee, if using weapons) in a resisted roll. The difficulty is dependent on what type of maneuver or weapon is being using, as described on the table below:

Firefights also follow much the same system, and thus can be integrated easily. For precise details on how they function, see the Firefight rules system later.

Melee Resolution Chart

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage	Ability
Throw	7	Strength	Brawl
Grapple	6	Strength	Brawl
Bite*	5	Strength +1	Brawl
Strike/ Punch	6	Strength	Brawl
Kick	7	Strength + 1	Brawl
Claws	6	Strength + 2	Brawl
Sap	4	Strength	Melee
Club	4	Strength + 1	Melee
Knife	4	Strength + 1	Melee
Foil	5	Strength + 3	Melee
Stake	6	Strength + 2	Melee
Saber	6	Strength + 4	Melee
Axe	7	Strength + 5	Melee

*Before you can Bite, you need to have successfully Grappled your opponent first. See the Grapple rules below.

The combatant with the most successes manages to make contact, and thus do damage. Each success more than the opponent's total gives the combatant an additional damage die. The damage is calculated by rolling the number of dice indicated on the chart above plus the number of additional damage dice figured from the last roll due to your extra successes. Difficulty is the opponent's Stamina + 3. Each success on the damage roll indicates that the target loses a Health Level. The other combatant is unable to inflict any damage this turn.

Vampires can make a "soak" roll using Stamina + Fortitude to see if they can resist the damage inflicted. The difficulty for this roll is the number of damage successes the attacker achieved + 5 (max of ten of course). Each success reduces the loss of Health Levels by one. A failure means that the character takes full damage. Each botch on this roll indicates that one of the wound levels received is an aggravated wound, and is thus much more difficult to heal. Most often this indicates some sort of maiming, such as the loss of an arm or just a finger — it takes time to regrow that sort of thing.

If no one gets more successes, then it is considered to be a stalemate, and nothing happens that turn. Both combatants continue to struggle with one another.

As mentioned above, there are three different types of hand-to-hand combat that a character can attempt to perform:

Throw: In this maneuver, the character actually throws their opponent away from them, into a wall or onto the ground. This may stun the opponent (it does if any damage is done). A Strength roll must be made for damage, each success signifying one loss of a Health Level.

When characters are stunned, they are confused and are generally incapable of taking action for one turn. For that turn, the character cannot roll more dice than they have Stamina. The following turn, they can take actions as normal. The effects of a stun can be completely mitigated by the expenditure of a Willpower point.

Grapple: This means wrestling and attempting to hold another character so that they cannot move. No damage is actually inflicted, but each success reduces the number of dice the opponent can roll the next turn. Presumably, the opponent will eventually be immobilized. At such a point, the grappler only needs to get one success per turn to keep their opponent in that hold. At any time, the grappler can assign as many of his Dice Pool as he wishes to a damage roll, the difficulty is the opponent's Stamina +3.

After a successful Grapple, you can decide to bite your opponent (this is a bite employing the fangs). This is the only time a bite action may be taken in combat. However, a successful bite attack may necessitate a Frenzy roll (use Self-Control) if blood is drawn. If your next action is a successful Grapple attack, you can begin to withdraw blood from your opponent. If your opponent is mortal, this will end the fight.

Strike: The character strikes the other, either with a weapon or part of their own body. This causes damage. All melee weapons use this type of attack, as do punches and kicks.

If you are attempting to stake a Vampire through the heart, you need five successes to do so. These must be achieved in a single turn. Once this occurs, the Vampire is completely immobilized.

Complications:

• **Dodge:** A player can actively dodge, instead of trying to match their opponent head to head. Instead of Dexterity + Brawl, they roll a Dexterity + Dodge (difficulty is their opponent's Dexterity + 1). Every success takes away one of the successes of the opponent. Normally you will want to divide your roll in order to get a Dodge roll, but sometimes that will be your sole action. You can declare a Dodge at any time before an opponent rolls the dice, simply by announcing "Dodge!" and declaring the number of dice from your Dice Pool that you are employing. If you have already 'spent' all your Dice Pool, you can no longer Dodge. In some situations, declaring a Dodge will not be allowed by the Storyteller because it does not make sense (e.g. a surprise attack).

• **Subdual:** This is an attempt to persuade an opponent to give up rather than fight to the finish; it is usually accomplished by stunning them repeatedly. Once a character has lost all Willpower and is once again stunned, then they remain stunned until the end of the current Scene, unless their life is directly threatened. They have simply lost the will to fight.

• **Immobilization:** If a target is immobilized (e.g someone is holding them down), but is still struggling, then the difficulty for the attack roll is lowered by two, making it much easier to hit. However, if the target is completely immobilized (e.g. is tied up or has a stake through the heart), then no roll is required and the attack roll is an automatic success.

Firefight

A firefight is any type of armed combat engaged with projectile weapons. It is the most common type of combat in **Vampire** because guns are so deadly and so readily available (at least in the United States). Like all action Scenes, firefights turn are divided into three parts:

Description: When players are in a situation where combat is possible or likely, be sure to describe what is happening so they realize their options without you having to ask. Be sure to describe things so that the players are not always forced into a fight, but have the option of ducking away or diving into cover just before it begins (not always possible in a surprise situation).

Initiative is calculated by rolling Wits + Alertness, as described at the start of this chapter. The difficulty is usually a 4. Have the individual with the highest number of successes tell you what she intends to do. Before anyone else does anything, you resolve her actions as discussed below. Then you continue with the person that has the next highest Initiative on down, until everyone has gone in that turn. Within the context of the firearms system, there are five different types of actions that can be taken. The player must decide what she wants to do: Dodge, Fire, Yield, Heal or Move. She may of course perform any other action, and may even wish to enter into melee.

Determination Stage: The player makes a Firearms roll. He rolls Dexterity + Firearms; difficulty is listed on the gun chart. This is always the difficulty of the gun, unless you are at point blank range (under 3 yards) in which case the difficulty is 3, or you're at extreme range (over the listed range for the weapon, but not over twice that amount), in which case the difficulty is 8. If the distance is over twice the listed range, then the shot may not be made.

If the player succeeds in the roll, then each success gained is considered to be an automatic level of damage, above and beyond any damage that might be inflicted because of the damage roll. Remember, it is not always how big a gun you have, but how well you place the bullets. A simple botch usually means a jam in the gun, or it could mean a ricochet that makes you duck (and lose a die from your Dice Pool for the next turn). More severe botches could mean you hit a friend or even that the gun explodes.

Resolution Stage: Next, the attacker needs to make a damage roll, which is made to calculate any damage in excess of the automatic damage incurred by the success of the attack roll. The player rolls the number of dice equal to the damage roll listed for their gun on the weapons chart. Difficulty is determined by the opponent's Stamina + 3. Every success causes the target to lose an additional Health Level. Each botch indicates that one of the automatic successes is cancelled because of sheer bad luck. So yes, it is possible to hit and not do any damage — rare but possible, e.g the bullet simply passes through the web of the hand.

Vampires can make a "soak" roll in an attempt to diminish the effects of the damage. The player rolls Stamina + Fortitude. The difficulty for this roll is the damage factor listed for each Weapon + 3 (thus the difficulty for soaking the damage of a shotgun blast would be a 9). Each success reduces the loss of Health Levels by one. A failure means that the character takes full damage. Each botch on this roll indicates that one of the wound levels received is an aggravated wound, and is thus much more difficult to heal. Most often this indicates some sort of maiming, such as the loss of an arm or just a finger.

Complications:

Cover: If a character is behind some sort of shelter (in a car or behind a lamp-post), then your chances of hitting them can be severely reduced. Look on the chart below to see the amount the difficulty is raised by.

A character may purposely shoot through a character's cover in hopes that their bullet will actually penetrate the cover. If you shoot directly through the cover, then the difficulty is normal (ie. don't apply the penalties listed below). Simply

have the player reduce their successful damage dice by 1-20, depending on the thickness of the barrier. Any successes they receive over this amount can be applied normally. Any roll that is cancelled out by the cover can be assumed to hit that cover, and any that aren't cancelled out are considered to pierce through the cover, wounding the target. Some barriers are impossible to penetrate with hand weapons (you need a LAW rocket for that).

Cover	Raise Difficulty By
Lying flat	1
Fast moving target	1
Standing behind light pole	2
Behind wall	3
Mostly behind corner of building	3
Head exposed	4
Only part of head exposed	5

Weapons Chart

Type Example	Difficulty	Damage	Rate	Clip	Conceal	Range (yds)
Revolver, Lt. SW M640 (.38 special)	6	2	3	6	P	12
Revolver, Hv. Colt Andocana (.44 magnum)	7	4	2	6	J	50
Pistol, Lt. Glock-17 (9mm)	7	2	4	17+1	P	20
Pistol, Hv. Sig P220 (.45 ACP)	8	3	3	7+1	J	25
Rifle Remington M-700 (30-06)	8	6	1	5+1	N	300
SMG, Small* Ingram Mac-10 (9mm)	7	2	18	30+1	J	25
SMG, Large* UZI (9mm)	6	2	21	30+1	T	50
Assault Rifle* Steyr-Aug (5.56mm)	7	5	21	42+1	N	200
Shotgun Ithaca M-37 (12 gauge)	5	6	1	5+1	T	20
Semi-Auto Shotgun Fianchi Law 12 (12 gauge)	6	6	3	8+1	T	20

Rate: The maximun number of bullets the gun can fire in a single turn.

Clip: The number of bullets that can be held in one clip or in the barrel. The +1 indicates that a bullet can be held in the chamber, making the gun ready to fire.

Conceal: P = can be hidden in pocket, J = can be hidden inside jacket, T = can be hidden inside a trench coat, N = cannot be hidden on your personal at all.

Range: This is the practical range of the gun. You may fire up to double the listed range, but it is considered to be a long range shot.

** indicates that the gun is capable of three round bursts.*

The cover a character takes can have deleterious effects on their aim. Reduce their attack dice by 1-5 depending on the exact circumstances.

This system can also be used to calculate the difficulty of an aimed shot. If a character wishes to shoot an opponent in the leg (to hamper their movement or avoid the body armor) simply calculate it as a function of cover. In this case, the difficulty would be raised by 3.

Note: A 10 is always a success an attack roll, no matter how high the difficulty has been raised. Cover can never raise the difficulty higher than a 10, thereby making the shot impossible, unless, of course, the character is *completely* under cover, in which case the attacker obviously has no hope of success unless they can penetrate the cover.

• **Dodge:** If your opponent gains the Initiative (gets the first shot), you still have the option to Dodge, thereby gaining the potential to jump out of the field of fire and avoid the bullets aimed for you. You can declare a Dodge at any time before an opponent rolls the dice, simply by announcing "Dodge!" and declare the number of dice from your Dice Pool that you are employing. If you have already "spent" all your Dice Pool, you can no longer Dodge. In many situations, declaring a Dodge will not be allowed by the Storyteller because it does not make sense (e.g. an ambush).

Sometimes you will only assign part of your Dice Pool to the Dodge. Assigning some of your Dice Pool to a Dodge is always a good idea. To Dodge, you roll Dodge + Dexterity. The difficulty is dependent on the availability of nearby cover. Each success takes away one of your opponent's successes. You can even take away successes from different opponents. If you get five successes, you take no damage, no matter how many successes the attacker obtained.

Remember that a Dodge is finding some sort of cover from which to avoid the bullets aimed at you. This will probably have a detrimental effect on your intended action that round, as you give it up in favor of self preservation. After the a Dodge attempt, you end up behind some sort of cover or at the very least, lying on the ground (if there was no cover to be found).

You can also Dodge while already behind cover. This assumes that the character is weaving back and forth behind the cover, only exposing parts of their body for brief moments while shooting and then ducking back behind the cover. The cover makes the difficulty higher for shooting the character while a successful Dodge will take away a number of the successes gained. This can be a very potent defensive maneuver.

The availability of nearby cover determines the difficulty of the Dodge:

Difficulty	Terrain
8	Flat and featureless, no cover (you dive to the ground).
7	Partial cover within running distance (3 yards).
6	Full cover within running distance (3 yards).
4	Full cover within diving distance (1 yard).
2	By moving back half a step, you are back under full cover.

• **Multiple Shots:** All the guns listed on the gun chart above are capable of making multiple shots per turn. However, to take advantage of this, the player must divide her Dice Pool a number of times equal to the number of shots that are to be fired. Thus, if you were shooting a heavy revolver, you could fire two shots in one turn and would divide your Dice Pool between those two actions. Most frequently, you would put less dice on the latter actions (so as to best simulate recoil). You can multi-fire three round bursts, so it is possible to fire up to 21 bullets in this way if you have the appropriate gun, however, you would have to divide your Dice Pool up by 7 (21 shots divided by 3 shots per burst). This is the only way that full auto is possible.

• **Three Round Burst:** Most automatic guns are set for three round bursts, a setting which minimizes the effects of recoil and preserves ammunition, yet is still quite deadly. A character can decide to fire a three round burst instead of a single shot at any time, as long as gun is capable of it (see the gun chart). You do not roll more than once, but you gain 2 extra dice on your attack roll and 2 extra dice on damage. Three round bursts can be deadly because they make it so easy to hit. This option cannot be used at long range.

• **More Than One Target:** You can only shoot at more than one target if you are shooting enough bullets to hit every target you attempt to shoot. You must divide your attack dice into different Dice Pools (one for each of your targets). You roll for damage separately. However, the difficulty for each roll is increased by one for every additional target you aim at. After all, there is only so much you can do in 3 seconds.

• **Ambush:** In occasions when an ambush has been set, the ambushed characters might be surprised. Unless they can make a Perception + Alertness roll with a difficulty of 4, assuming the ambushers are fairly well hidden, then they must wait out an entire turn without doing anything (even Dodge). They simply get hit. The following round they get to make Dodge rolls or they can fire back. If they succeed in the Perception roll, the character can make a Dodge or attack roll right away, but they can only roll one dice for every success on the Perception roll.

• **Two Weapons:** You can fire any two weapons at the same time by using one in each hand (if the weapons are normally 2-handed, you need a Firearms Ability of 4 to

do so). You have to divide your Firearms + Dexterity rating between the two separate guns, otherwise there is no penalty.

• **Aiming:** You get to add your Perception rating to your Dexterity + Firearms Dice Pool if you spend time aiming. However, it takes one turn for each die you add, to the maximum of your Perception — it takes time and patience to aim. Additionally, the target may not be moving at a speed faster than a walk. You can aim for less rounds than your Perception rating, but you can only add one die for each round spent aiming — you may not reach your full potential if you don't aim long enough. Shotguns and SMGs cannot be aimed. If the gun has a scope, then you get to add +2 to your Dice Pool in addition to the die you add to your Dice Pool for your Perception after one round of aiming. After the +3 you add in the first round (+2 for the scope and +1 for your Perception), you add one die for each successive round up to your Perception score as outlined above.

• **Unjamming gun:** The turn after your gun jammed, you must roll Firearms + Wits (difficulty 5). If you succeed, you can continue to fire the next turn, otherwise you must roll to unjam the gun again the following turn. This is your sole action for the turn.

• **Body Armor:** Humans and Vampires who wear body armor can make a "soak" roll. Different types of body armor have a different Armor Rating, which indicates the number of soak dice that can be rolled. Each success on this roll eliminates one damage success, but unlike the Vampire's soak roll, botches do not indicate aggravated wounds. Rather, each botch indicates the permanent loss of one Armor Rating for that particular suit.

Class	Armor Rating	Penalty
Class One (Concealable)	1	0
Class Two (Armor T-shirt)	2	1
Class Three (Vest)	3	2
Class Four (Flak Jacket)	4	3
Class Five (Full Suit)	6	4

Note: "Penalty" indicates the amount by which the difficulty is raised on all Dexterity rolls. With the full suit, the character also has a penalty of 2 on all Perception rolls, due to the protective helmet.

Stunt Driving

This system is used to determine the outcome of nearly any type of automobile chase or maneuver. Dice rolls in chases are not only made to see how fast you are going, but also to see if you stay on the road or not. Each vehicle is rated for its maximum safe driving speed, as well as its maneuverability. One vehicle is not always as fast as another nor as maneuverable, so the details of the chase are often dependent on the make of the vehicle (see the chart below).

A character can make special maneuvers in order to catch or lose the other vehicle, such as spinning around a tight corner, doing a 180° turn, or wheeling about to block a road. Essentially, one character makes a special maneuver and the other player must copy that maneuver by making the same or an approximate roll, or lose out in the "game."

Have the player roll his or her Drive + Dexterity (or perhaps Perception). However, the maximum number of dice that can be rolled is the Maneuverability rating of the vehicle. The difficulty is determined by how difficult the maneuver is, as well as how fast the car is going. You should give each maneuver a basic difficulty factor from 2-7, and then designate a speed at which it can be completed at that difficulty. This is most often the Safe Speed, but can be much less depending on how complicated or tight the maneuver is. The difficulty goes up by one for every 10 mph the vehicle exceeds that speed while performing the maneuver. The drivers get to decide how fast the vehicles perform the maneuver, though they will not always be able to slow down enough to avoid a crash or collision.

Vehicle	Safe Speed	Max Speed	Maneuverability
6-wheel truck	60	90	3
Bus	60	100	3
18-wheeler	70	110	4
Sedan	70	120	5
Mini-van	70	120	6
Ford Pinto	70	130	6
Ford Mustang	100	140	7
Mazda RX7	110	150	8
Ferarri	130	170	9
Lamborgini	140	240	10

Pursuit

This simple system involves a character attempting to catch up with another one. One opponent starts with a number of successes either determined by the Storyteller (this is the preferred method) or by having the pursued character roll a Dexterity + Athletics roll for each turn that they have a head start on the pursuer and adding up the number of successes achieved. This roll has a difficulty of 6. This number of successes must be collected by the other character before he can catch up. Once they do, they can try to grapple the person fleeing (see the Melee rules). They might only want to catch up half way, just to get a better shot at the fleeing character.

Have each character involved make a Dexterity + Athletics roll. Each success means they have traveled a little farther, a failure indicates they have faltered, and a botch means they have fallen and will not be able to make a roll at all the next turn (they need to get up off the ground). If the pursuer makes more successes in a turn than the pursued, then they have gained on them by that number of successes. If the pursued makes more successes in a turn than the pursuer, then they have pulled away

by that number of successes. If a character ever gains a lead of enough successes (7-20, depending on the terrain), then he has gotten away and has managed to elude pursuit.

This system can be modified for use with car chase, if the standard driving system does not suit your needs.

Stealing

While not nice, theft and robbery are sometimes an element of a **Vampire** story. On occasion, a Vampire has no other recourse. There are many different ways to steal, though we will only discuss a few below. If the character's Humanity is above 7, you will want him to make a Humanity roll when they steal something, especially if it was from someone who really needed whatever was stolen. If the theft was a really lousy thing to do, you may want even characters with Humanity of less than 7 to make a Humanity roll.

Shoplift: Player rolls Dexterity + Streetwise. Difficulty varies depending on circumstances — crowded store, small vs. large item, guards and mirrors. Normally it is an 8. Failure indicates that the storekeeper notices you taking something, a botch indicates that you have been caught red-handed. The number of successes on the shoplifting roll determines the difficulty of the storekeeper's Perception + Alertness roll. One success means the shopkeeper is highly suspicious, five successes means he has caught the character red-handed.

The player can make a Perception + Streetwise roll to see if they are being watched or not. Difficulty is at least an 8, but each success cancels one of the storekeeper's successes.

Pickpocket: Player rolls Dexterity + Streetwise. Difficulty varies depending on the circumstances — thick crowd or deep pockets. The number of successes determines the difficulty of the target's Perception + Alertness roll. They need to roll higher than the pickpocket's number of successes. One success means they move away unconsciously (you can try again), two successes means they turn to look at you but don't know what's going on, and three successes means they catch on. A botch indicates that they notice you in the act and catch you red-handed.

Cat-burglar: You need to roleplay through this, with lots of Stealth and Perception rolls. Once the cat-burglar gets inside, they need to find what they were looking for. You'll have to judge the player on how slickly they planed and executed the burglary, and then judge their chances of getting caught. Remember that there is always a chance that things might go wrong. If more than one person tries to cat-burglar, then they greatly increase their chances of getting caught, however it can be boring for the other players to wait for one person to get done with their solo. Roleplay it out, but if people are waiting, don't spend more than a few minutes on it.

Holdup: The character holds up a store, usually by threatening the storekeeper, and then takes whatever they want. A Manipulation + Intimidation roll must be made. The difficulty is the storekeeper's Willpower. Usually some sort of gun must be displayed or a demonstration of force made for the Intimidation to be truly effective. Each success indicates that storekeeper is intimidated for 1 minute. A failure indicates an angry and unruly storekeeper who just might try something, and a botch indicates that the storekeeper indeed tries something. If the storekeeper gets killed or even injured as a result of the character's actions, a Humanity roll is in order.

Social

She did not seduce, she ravished.

—George Meredith, *Diana of the Crossways*

Seduction

Seduction is an unnatural means of gaining intimacy with another person, because every step is carefully staged and real feelings are not shared (they are faked). A seduction goes in stages, and unless a person is successful in each stage in succession, he will not be successful at all. This system is designed to replicate the activities of a dominant person (not necessarily male) over a more submissive one. If the emotions and motives are true, then you should ignore this system and roleplay it out.

Though Vampires could easily use their Dominate and Presence Disciplines to seduce a mortal, often they do not wish to do so, preferring the hunt to the capture. In many cases, depending on the Nature of the character, Willpower can be regained if they are successful in their seduction. Hedonists, Connivers and Gallants can regain 1 Willpower by successfully completing a Seduction.

Opening Line: Have the player roll Appearance + Subterfuge. Difficulty is the Wits + 3 of the subject (player gains a bonus of 1-3 dice if it's a good line, minus 1-3 if it's a stupid one). Each additional success adds an extra die to your roll on the next stage.

Witty exchange: Have the player roll Wits + Subterfuge. Difficulty is the Intelligence + 3 of the subject. Again, give bonuses and penalties because of roleplaying. Each additional success adds an extra die to your roll on the next stage.

Conversation: Have the player roll their Charisma + Empathy. Difficulty is the Perception +3 of the subject. Again, roleplaying bonuses come in to play here. Each additional success adds an extra die to your roll on the next stage.

Intimacies: At this point, the couple may move to a private area and become intimate physically. No roll is required, especially when one considers that at this point the Vampire can drink from the subject.

Fast Talk

This system describes a means to browbeat and confuse someone into submission. The player must roll Manipulation + Subterfuge, though Charisma or Appearance can sometimes be used, as could Acting. The difficulty is the target's Wits + Streetwise. Every success takes away one of the dice the target gets on the next turn, which could well be an Intelligence roll to remember what they were intending to do in the first place (like arrest you). The target is allowed to make whatever rolls they wish, however, the fast talk is likely to confuse them too much at some point to take the appropriate action. Willpower points can be expended to resist the fast talk. Failure indicates that the attempt has faltered, and the subject can try to get something in edgewise. They could attempt or explain themselves, or perhaps even attempt to fast talk back — this attempt to say something back continues until they fail or botch. A botch indicates that the subject doesn't get confused, only angry. Fast talk by this character will never again be effective on them.

Repeated rolls might be necessary to confuse the character enough so that they really don't have a clue to what is going on. As Storyteller, you need to run attempts at fast talk in a way that is consistent with the mood of your game. It can be as slaphappy or as deadly serious as you like.

When he awakens, it is night again.

Fitting In

Vampires don't always fit in, and fitting in can sometimes be more important than it might seem. If someone doesn't fit in, then they won't be able to adjust well to the culture, and will not have the same freedom or latitude that they might otherwise enjoy. They won't be able to use their Abilities to the fullest.

Have the player roll Charisma+Etiquette. Depending on the culture or subgroup, the Traits can change — use Presence, Guile, Intelligence or even Strength — but let the players figure it out from your hints that they should change their tact. "The younger gang members are all strutting around and bragging about how tough they are." Give the player a bonus or penalty of 1-3 dice due to roleplaying — if they really screw it up, don't let them succeed no matter what they roll. The difficulty is determined by deciding how snotty or friendly the culture is and how different the character is from it. Usually it will be 6.

Each success means that the player is allowed to roll one die in other Social rolls with the same group (such as bribery or information gathering). The player can collect a number of successes over several turns, gaining the trust and friendship of the people who they are with. When they are interacting with that culture or sub-group, they can only roll as many dice as they have accumulated successes with this roll.

If the player tries to make a roll too soon after their first try (how long is too little is up to you, don't tell, only hint), then the difficulty should be higher and any failure should be considered a botch. If the player fails, then the others turn away, excuse themselves, or even snub the character. If the character botches, it means that these people have taken a profound dislike to him and he could be in trouble.

This system is not always necessary or appropriate. Use it only when you wish to roleplay through the process of the characters trying to know someone. Mix in a lot of roleplaying with each roll, and you will notice its effectiveness in getting the players to be sensitive to the uniqueness of the people they are with.

Oration

If a player wants their character to give a speech, but doesn't want to actually give it, you can use this Orate system. You want them to describe what they say, and maybe tell you a memorable phrase they use — that might even get them started into roleplaying it out. Often it is very difficult to roleplay, so never force your players to do so. Just use this system.

Simply have them make a Charisma + Leadership roll. The difficulty is dependent on the mood of the crowd, its willingness to hear what the orator says, and its penchant for throwing rotten vegetables. Usually it is a 7. If the orator has any sort of reputation, you may wish that to change the difficulty by +/- 3. If the character has Fame or Status among the group being spoke to, then they can add that rating to their Dice Pool. The number of successes indicates how won over the crowd is (see the following chart). It is a simple roll, so the player has only one crack at it. A failure indicates that the character was ignored. A botch indicates that the character is going to be lynched, or if that sort of thing isn't common, then booing will begin.

Successes	Crowd Reaction
One Success	They listened, but aren't excited.
Two Successes	You've convinced them somewhat.
Three Successes	They're won over by what you've said.
Four Successes	The crowd is completely enthralled.
Five Successes	The crowd is in the palm of your hand.

If the speech is vital to the story, then you can let the player make several rolls. If you want to spend some time on it, you can make it an extended action, each roll mixed in with roleplaying. The character can spend as many turns as they would like on the speech, but after the third turn, the difficulty goes up each turn by one. More successes than five might be required to completely win over the crowd.

Interrogation

Interrogation can occur in a number of different situations. It is a form of questioning, not torture, though Intimidation is certainly employed. Torture can be used, but you will have to develop your own rules for that if you wish to include it in your Chronicle.

Have the player make a Manipulation + Intimidation roll; the difficulty is the victim's Manipulation + Wits. The number of successes indicates the amount of information obtained (see the chart below). A failure indicates you have learned nothing of value. A botch indicates that they tell you nothing, and will never tell you anything — or worse, they lie. For this reason, it is often useful if the Storyteller makes the roll for the player.

Successes	Information
One	Only a few mumbled facts.
Two	Some relevant facts.
Three	Much interesting information.
Four	They talk on and on.
Five	You learn everything.

Credibility

This system is used when a character attempts to persuade someone that they actually are telling the truth, such as when a witness attempts to persuade the jury that she is not lying, or when someone tries to convince someone else that they are who they say they are (even if they aren't). It is normally a simple roll. The player must make a Manipulation + Leadership roll. The difficulty is the other subject's Intelligence + Subterfuge. Lower the difficulty by 1-3 if the character is telling the truth (people can sometimes tell). Each success indicates a higher degree of believability. Five successes indicate that the subject or subjects are completely convinced. A failure indicates disbelief, a botch indicates that the character is caught in a lie (or that the subject thinks they have caught them in a lie).

The Facedown

This system is used during facedowns, when two characters are engaged in a duel of Willpower where neither wants to be the first to back down. No words are exchanged, they just glare at one another. This is common among Vampires, where the intense hostility that two of Vampires might have for each other must be restrained, but many times cannot be concealed.

Both opponents must roll Charisma + Intimidation, with the difficulty being their opponent's Willpower. The one who first accumulates as many successes as their opponent's Wits + 5 wins. Winning means they force the other person to look away. A player can use a Willpower point to avoid this and keep on glaring, but eventually they will run out of Willpower.

Performances

This system is used whenever a character gives any type of performance, whether it be comedy, music, acting or storytelling. It can be on a stage or in a nightclub, formal or informal, and the audience can be humans or Kindred.

Have the player roll the appropriate Attribute + Ability. It could be Wits/Intelligence/Charisma/Dexterity + Music/ Acting/Leadership — you decide which, depending on the type of performance. The difficulty is assigned by the Storyteller on the basis of how receptive the audience is. A failure indicates a lackluster, eminently forgettable performance. A botch indicates a miserable performance that cannot even be finished — the instrument breaks or the character is booed off the stage.

The number of successes indicates how moved the audience is (see the chart below). These successes determine the artistic merit or technical verisimilitude of the piece.

Successes	Your Performance	Reaction
One	Mediocre	Polite Applause
Two	Average	Approval
Three	Good	Genuine Appreciation
Four	Superior	Vigorous Applause
Five	Exceptional	Ecstatic Reaction
Six	Superb	Immediate Sensation
Seven	Brilliant	Miracle, Once in a Lifetime

Mental

Trieste, Italy — Gun-toting toughs hijacked a bloodmobile near the Italian-Yugoslavian border, stealing hundreds of pints of freshly drawn blood — and lawmen blame the robbery on vicious, thirst-crazed Vampires!

— Weekly World News,
Vampires Hijack Bloodmobile!

A hunger lodged deep in his being demands attention. He looks for food, but he finds only more blood.

Research

Research will often be the only way for characters to proceed to the next stage of a story. They will have to investigate matters in a library, newspaper office or through computer files in order to get the information they need. Research is a great way to let high Intelligence characters show off, and lets you take the focus off of fast-paced action.

Have the players roll their Intelligence + Investigation (or appropriate Knowledge rating). The difficulty is based upon how difficult it is to find the information.

Difficulty	Accessibility of the Information
2	Generally available
4	Widely documented
6	Accessible
8	Difficult to find
10	Incredibly well concealed

The number of successes determines how much the character discovers. One success might mean that they only get the barest glimmering of a fact, while five successes might mean that they get the full (and maybe truthful) story. Depending on what the character is looking for, it might require 10 or 20 successes for her to get all that can be found.

The player might want to continue the research after gaining a partial success. However, continued research won't take the same amount of time as the initial search. Doing basic research usually takes only an hour — that's the first roll. To do more in-depth research, the second roll takes one complete day. If the player wants a third roll, it will take a week, a fourth roll takes a month, a fifth roll takes a year, and after that use your imagination. Therefore, it is easy to see how some research projects can take years or even decades to complete.

If a player wants to go back and try a roll over (because they failed, but think there is still information to be found), make them take twice as long as they did the first time, and have them roll Perception instead of Intelligence. Additionally, the difficulty will be at least one higher. Again, use the number of successes to determine how much they have discovered.

Composition

Sometimes a character will want to create an original and creative work of art — a painting, song or poem. Though you will probably want to just let them do so, sometimes a roll can make the creative process a little more interesting. Have the player make a roll of Intelligence + an appropriate Ability (such as Music or Acting). The difficulty is chosen by the player, but the higher the difficulty, the more complicated and elegant the final product is. Each success indicates how original, creative and worthy the art is. These successes can help you determine

what the reaction is to that piece of art — something which is very important to some Kindred (such as the Toreador).

Recollection

If a character is trying to remember a fact of any sort, you'll want to use this system. The player must roll Intelligence + the appropriate Ability (usually a Knowledge). The difficulty is assigned by the Storyteller, but is usually low and rarely over 7. The more successes, the more the character remembers. Use the following chart as a guideline. A failure indicates nothing was learned and a botch indicates that what the character remembers isn't true (if the player doesn't roleplay this properly, then award him or her fewer experience points).

Successes	Memory
One	Have a hazy idea of what it was about.
Two	Got most of the facts straight, recall faces.
Three	Remember names and numbers.
Four	Complete recollection.
Five	Exact and precise recollection, every detail.

Track

This system is used to track people and things by following the physical trail that they leave. Roll Perception + Survival (or Investigation in the city—but rarely are tracks left on sidewalk and pavement). The difficulty is decided by the Storyteller based on weather conditions, terrain and the age of the tracks, but it is an average of 8. Each success lowers the difficulty of the next roll by one. However, you might interrupt this easing of the tracking by inserting a tough obstacle with a difficulty of 9, or at least higher than the difficulty currently required, such as when the pursued crosses running water.

The character needs to succeed a certain number of turns, as determined by the Storyteller, depending on the length of the trail — each turn is usually about 3 minutes long. If the character misses a roll, they can try again, only this time the difficulty is one higher. Once it goes above 10, the character has lost the trail.

Forgery

This system is designed to allow characters to forge documents. Two rolls are required: one to know what type of forms and signatures are necessary, and the other to actually sit down and forge the papers. You are only able to roll as many dice on the second roll as you achieved successes on the first roll. It is very difficult to successfully forge documents. You may wish to roll the second roll yourself so that the player does not know exactly how good the forgery is.

The first roll is made using Intelligence + Bureaucracy (in some cases Linguistics is necessary). The difficulty is based on the complexity of the document being forged (average is 6). A failure indicates that not enough is known about the nature of these papers and that some research must be performed. Another roll can be made after a period of hours or days. A botch indicates that the character has no clue of what they are doing, and cannot try to make the roll again unless some new information is found.

The second roll is a Dexterity + Bureaucracy. The difficulty varies but is normally a 6. Each success indicates a higher grade of forgery is accomplished — see the chart below for a general idea of relative worth. A failure indicates that the paperwork isn't passable at all — it was too difficult for you and you cannot try again. A botch indicates that some fatal flaw was made, which will be readily seen by any official to whom the papers are shown.

He tarries too long — the woman bids him to walk with her this evening.

Successes	Results
One Success	Passable only to a casual glance.
Two Successes	Could trick those who have never seen the real thing.
Three Successes	Would fool most, but not those familiar with the actual thing.
Four Successes	It would take an expert to detect it.
Five Successes	Perfect forgery, no one could tell it was a fake.

Search

This system is used to enable characters to search for something in a confined area, like a room. Have the player roll a Perception + Investigation with the difficulty determined by the Storyteller (usually a number between 7-10). Each success indicates more has been found. Sometimes it might take a certain number of successes to actually find what is well hidden. If you want, a lower number of successes could warrant a hint or clue from you indicating where to look, thus encouraging roleplaying and a degree of puzzle solving. As much as possible, lead the players through the search step by step by having them describe to you where they are looking. Don't let them succeed if they didn't specifically state they were searching in the right area, and let them succeed automatically if their description is detailed enough.

The city air is somehow different. The men who walk the streets now seem but animals.

Cryptology

This system is used to decipher codes. Roll Intelligence + Linguistics. The difficulty will normally be quite high (between 8-10). The roll can be Intelligence + Computers if the character is using a computer to help them crack the code (plus the difficulty would be one less). Each success indicates that more of the code has been cracked. Multiple rolls can be made to accumulate successes. It can take anywhere from 2-20 successes to fully crack a code, depending on how complicated it is. Each "turn" can be from 1 minute to 1 month, depending on the needs of the story, the intricacy of the code, and the use of computers or not. Any failure indicates that all collected successes are lost and that the decoding must restart from the beginning. A botch indicates total failure and the job can never be attempted again.

Creating a code uses much the same process, with only a few differences. For instance, you get to make only 3 rolls, with a difficulty of 5, and want to accumulate as many successes as possible. The total number of successes indicates the number of successes it takes to crack the code.

Safecracking

A character needs a Security rating of 4 to even attempt to crack a safe. Even then, you should not allow them this specialized ability without an explanation of where they learned to do such a thing (from their background), or a short period of research and eduction.

Have them make a Security + Perception roll. The difficulty is based on the solidity of the safe and the tools that the character is using. Some safes will be impossible to crack with the tools on hand, regardless of the character's skill. A certain number of successes must be accumulated in order to open the safe. Failure means you cannot get the safe open and anyone examining it later can tell an attempt was made. A botch usually means an alarm has sounded.

Example of Play

I woke last night to the sound of thunder.
How far off, I sat and wondered.
Started humming a song from nineteen sixty two.
Ain't it funny how the night moves,
When you just don't seem to have as much to lose.
Strange how the night moves,
With autumn closing in.

— Bob Seger, *Night Moves*

The wash of light from the skylight was all that illuminated the otherwise moonless night. Drifting amongst the shadows, the city's Anarchs converged on the abandoned brewery. Most came for vengeance, but Elucid had come for reasons of his own.

He lived alone in the sewers near the waterfront. Curiosity had brought him forth from his rat-infested domain. Silently, he moved through the city, past the drunks, bums and other homeless. A prostitute and her John moved past Elucid, oblivious to his existence. With an agility born of crawling through sewer pipes, he scaled the fire escape outside Daley's, a restaurant that catered to the elite and the rich. In minutes, he swung his bulk over the top and onto the roof.

A moonbeam fell across his face, sharply displaying its grotesque ugliness. Elucid was a Nosferatu, and his lineage meant that he could never pass as human. Elucid loped across the rooftop, taking care to keep his footsteps silent. He glanced down into the main dining room through the skylight. The high and mighty dined in elegance below, and Elucid laughed to himself, "Perhaps I'll dine on one of them later tonight." But the meeting awaited his presence.

With superhuman grace, Elucid leapt the distance from the roof of ***Daley's*** *to the brewery. Word had it that the only entrance was through the brewery's roof. Sure enough, Elucid could make out the forms of various other Kindred as they descended down the stairway to his left. A young black boy shoved his way past, jostling Elucid into another Kindred, a rugged man with a wild, drugged look in his eyes. The two of them stared at Elucid openly, and gave him wide berth. He was used to that.*

Winding his way down the stairwell, Elucid eventually found himself in a large, open area of the brewery. Around him, perched on various balconies and old machinery, and grouped around a figure on the ground level, were the combined legions of the city's outcast Kindred, perhaps fifteen or so Anarchs. Elucid moved down to the ground level where he could hear what the

Rules Section

This was one of the first stories ever run in **Vampire**, with Mark as the Storyteller. He chose Chicago as the setting and developed a major conflict between the Anarchs and the Elders. The troupe consisted of Stewart, Steve, Lisa and himself. The game started with the players rolling up their characters — Stewart plays Elucid, a Nosferatu; Steve plays Travis, a Brujah; and Lisa plays Malcolm, a Gangrel.

Elucid lives alone in the sewers under the city and has finally emerged, more out of curiosity than anything else, to find out more about the Kindred of the city. Travis is a little black boy whom the Prince's men have been beating on for some time. His motivation is one of revenge. Malcolm was an ex-undercover narcotics agent who has grown addicted to the drugs in the blood he takes from drug addicts. He wants to find out more about the Elders, since he believes they were somehow involved with frustrating his efforts to crack a number of drug rings.

Mark decides that the opening scene will take place in an abandoned brewery, which was once the meeting place of all the outcast Vampires in the city until it was closed down by the Prince who tolerates no dissent. Word is out, however, that a new meeting is going to be held. The three characters all learn of this meeting separately through various contacts and converge on the brewery toward midnight.

The only access to the brewery is through a rooftop doorway. There is no easy way up the brewery building itself, but a restaurant next door, **Daley's**, has a fire escape and the jump to the brewery rooftop isn't that tough, especially for a Vampire. Mark decides that it is of moderate difficulty (a 6 or better needed on a ten-sided die) to jump from the roof of **Daley's** to the brewery. Elucid is the first character to arrive at the brewery. After climbing the fire escape, he rolls his Strength + Athletics to see if he makes it across the gap to the roof of the brewery. Elucid has a Strength of 4 and an Athletics of 2. He therefore picks up 6 (4+2) ten-sided die. This is his Dice Pool. Elucid needs to get at least one six or better on his dice to succeed in jumping to the roof of the brewery. He rolls and gets a 9, 7, 7, 4, 2, 1. Stewart has rolled 3 dice of seven or better for Elucid, but he has also rolled a 1, which cancels out one of his successes, leaving him with 2 successes. Therefore, Elucid leaps across the gap and lands safely on the roof. The Storyteller has Malcolm and Travis make the same action when they arrive and both succeed, though Malcolm only has one success and for a second, almost falls over the edge before he regains his balance.

After all the characters have made it to the brewery, Mark switches the scene to the main floor of the brewery, where Juggler, a lieutenant of the Prince of Gary, is the speaker for this meeting of the Kindred. Travis wants to see if he has heard of Juggler, so he rolls his Intelligence (2) + Politics (1).

speaker had to say. Rumor had it that the Vampire's name was Juggler and that he was from Gary. They say that he was free of the power of the Prince. But what business did he have with the Kindred of Chicago?

Elucid maneuvered himself to a position in back of the little black boy, but to the side of the drugged-out man. In the center of the little group, an imposing-looking Vampire with rich black skin, presumably Juggler, was shaking his fist in the air.

"We cannot let them rule over us any longer. They do not have the right! Together, we could stand against the Elders. But if we remain as divided and weak and cowardly as we are now, then they shall always have the power to force us to do their bidding."

"Word." It was the little kid, fist held high in the air, appearing for an instant like a young Malcolm X.

Elucid grunted to himself. What did this talk of banding together have to do with him? The other Kindred left him alone in his home in the sewers. Best that he got out of this affair before something unfortunate happened.

"Well, well, well. What have we here?" a voice drawled from above. "Looks like all the garbage of Chicago has gathered together in one stinking heap. I thought I told you boys to stay away from this here place?"

Elucid whirled to find two toadies of the Prince striding down the staircase. The fat one, who called himself the "Sheriff," and Kyle his "deputy." They stunk of smugness and cruelty — it made Elucid retch. As they approached the assembled group on the floor, a number of the Kindred on the balconies made their way to the exit.

Suddenly, she springs upon a man. Kyle is disgusted, yet strangely and horribly arroused.

Mark decides that it is an ease factor of 9 (this guy isn't well-known in these parts). Steve picks up 3 dice and rolls a 7,3,2. Nope, he hasn't heard a thing about Juggler.

Juggler starts delivering his soliloquy on why the outcast Kindred of the city should rise up and fight off the yoke of the oppressive Prince. Suddenly, two of the Prince's toadies interrupt the meeting. They walk down to where some of the Kindred are gathered around Juggler. When some NPC Vampires try to flee, Sheriff warns them about the gasoline he has spread on the roof, and the instructions to set the place ablaze if he isn't the first one out the door.

Lisa wants to see if Malcolm can smell the gasoline on the roof. Malcolm's Perception (4) + Alertness (2) Dice Pool is 6. Mark assigns a difficulty of 6, so Malcolm gets an automatic success (the Dice Pool equals the difficulty) and Malcolm mutters his finding to Elucid, who is standing near him.

When Mark has Sheriff smash the guitar of a musician Kindred, Stewart decides that Elucid, whose Nature is Cavalier, has had enough. Elucid launches himself at the head Vampire. This is all that Travis had been waiting for, since he had recognized the other Vampire, Kyle, as one of the Vampires who had beaten him up recently. Malcolm, who was still under the influence of some drugged blood he drank that night, circles around to Kyle's rear. The rest of the Vampires scramble for the exit, too fearful of the Elders to oppose them directly.

Since the characters are going into Melee, Mark asks each of them to make a statement of intent: Elucid wants to Grapple the Sheriff, Travis wants to jump on Kyle 's back, and Malcolm wants to circle to Kyle 's back and Punch him from the rear (Malcolm can do what amounts to 2 actions because he has a Celerity of 1). Mark figures that Sheriff is ready for Elucid, and Kyle readies himself for Travis' attack. This leaves Malcolm free for his attack on Kyle 's rear.

Mark has Elucid roll his Dexterity (2) + Brawl (3) with an ease factor of 6 (from the Melee Resolution Chart). The Sheriff rolls his Dexterity + Brawl, with an ease factor of 7 (since he is trying to Kick Elucid in the groin). Stewart picks up 5 dice for his Pool and rolls 2 successes. Mark rolls 3 successes for Sheriff, so Elucid misses his attack and Sheriff connects with Elucid's groin (an example of a resisted action). Since Sheriff had one more success than Elucid did, he connects and rolls damage dice equal to his Strength + 1 + the number of additional successes he had over and above Elucid. Therefore, Mark rolls 5 damage dice (3 for the leader's Strength plus 1 and one for his additional success), with an ease factor equal to Elucid's Stamina + 3 (ie. a total of eight in this case). Elucid is in luck, since the leader only rolls one success. Stewart checks off one Health Level on Elucid's character sheet.

Meanwhile, Travis has decided to change tactics and pulls out his switchblade. Malcolm has successfully circled around Kyle and tries to punch him in the small of the back. Kyle notices Malcolm and pivots so that he can defend against

Sheriff shook his finger at the fleeing Vampires. "Now, don't you boys go leaving so soon. You see, ya'll could get us all in a heap of trouble by flying out of here willy nilly." He noisily cleared his throat and then spat, "You see, my boys have poured gas-o-leen all over the top of this here building. Unless me and Kyle here are the first ones to peek our heads out of this place, they'll torch it."

Next to Elucid, the wild-eyed Vampire he'd stumbled into on the roof sniffed his nose and muttered under his breath, "He's right. The damn bastards have poured enough gasoline on the roof to drive to the moon and back."

Turning back to the two toadies, Elucid's ire began to rise. Sheriff continued, "Now just rest yourselves a minute boys, you don't want to go and get your purty little faces burned off now do ya?" Facing Juggler for the first time, the Sheriff's greasy face broke into an infuriating smile, "I don't want to see any of you congregating again in this part of the city. You ought to know by now that this is Ballard's turf. You be good boys now, and get yourselves lost. Do you understand me Jeb? How about you Elisa? And you Charlie, you should know better." All the Kindred he named either nodded or looked away.

"We have us a guest here from out of town. Manners dictate that we let our guests leave first. Besides, we don't want to keep Ballard waiting."

Motioning for Juggler to rise, Sheriff flashed out and caught a fledgling by the throat, causing the guy to gasp and drop his guitar. With a flick of his wrist, he flung the young Kindred against the wall. "And I don't like none of this here music neither." With that, he smashed the guitar with a stomp of his foot.

That was it. With a defiant cry of rage, Elucid broke from the crowd along the wall and tackled the bastard. Out of the corner of his eye, he saw the little kid jump on Kyle 's back, while the crazy man circled around for an attack from the rear. Then there was just the rage. He lunged at the Kindred and made an attempt to grab the Sheriff by the shoulders, but the man moved to the side and kicked him in the groin. Pain spread upward through his body, but Elucid kept on moving. His arm swung out, attempting to connect with the Vampire. However, his foot caught on the smashed guitar and he missed his mark, ending up face down on the floor.

Struggling to his feet, he whirled to face Sheriff. The two toadies were standing back to back now, with Kyle clutching his arm where the boy's switchblade had made its mark. Around him, the various Kindred were running for the exit. Sheriff realized the danger at the same time as Elucid and shouted, "You fools! We all gonna die if you leave without me!" His voice seemed to freeze them in place and everyone turned to hear what he had to say.

Turning back to Elucid and the others, Sheriff said, "Look, let's just say this little misunderstandin' never happened? Forgive and forget. I'd suggest that we leave these here premises before the whole place goes up in flames."

Malcolm's attack. Malcolm rolls 4 successes compared to Kyle's 2, so Malcolm rolls Strength (2) + his additional successes (2) and gets 2 successes, inflicting 2 Health Levels.

Next round, Elucid is going to try to punch Sheriff, while Travis is trying to stab Kyle with his switchblade and Malcolm is going to try to Punch Kyle again. Mark decides to resolve Elucid's battle first. Elucid rolls his Dexterity + Brawl again, this time getting only 1 success while rolling two 1's — a botch! Mark grins and informs Elucid that he has slipped on the remains of the smashed guitar, sending him sprawling onto the floor.

Meanwhile, Kyle is attacked by both Travis and Malcolm. He has a Dice Pool of 6, so he splits it up equally, with 3 dice being used against Malcolm and 3 dice being used against Travis. Malcolm doesn't roll any successes, while Kyle rolls 2. He does two Health Levels of damage to Malcolm. Meanwhile, Mark decides that the switchblade is equal to a knife for game purposes, so he has Travis roll his Dexterity (4) + Melee(2), against a difficulty of 4 (taken from the Melee Resolution Chart). Kyle rolls his remaining 3 dice from his Dice Pool. Travis rolls 3 successes while Kyle only rolls one. Steve rolls Travis' damage which is equal to his Strength (2) + 1 (from the Melee Resolution Chart) + his additional successes (2) for a total of 5 damage dice. The difficulty is Kyle 's Stamina+ 3. Travis rolls 2 successes and Kyle is injured in the arm for 2 Health Levels.

Very tentatively, the Fledgling lowers his mouth toward the man's neck.

With a nod of understanding, Elucid motioned the boy and the crazy away from Kyle. "After you, Sir." *With a grin of malice, Sheriff acknowledged the remark and walked off towards the stairs. Kyle gave an evil stare at the boy, but he followed his chief out, holding his injured arm with his left hand. Elucid kept right on the heels of the two as they headed out of the brewery. "Our best chance is to be as close to them as possible," he said to the other two, who were right behind him. They filed past the waiting Kindred, who packed in tightly behind the group as they headed up the stairs to the roof.*

The moment they reached the roof, the Sheriff bolted for the roof of Daley's, letting go of Juggler in the process. "Torch the damn place," he screamed to a waiting Kindred as the two toadies leapt across the chasm that separate the two buildings.

Elucid and the little black boy jumped right after the fleeing pair as a flaming torch was launched from the roof of ***Daley's****. Amazingly, the wild-eyed fellow went for the torch in a desperate attempt to catch it. The guy truly was crazy, or stupidly courageous. Elucid bowled into the Sheriff, who had fallen when he landed. The pair rolled around, struggling for leverage.*

On the roof of the brewery, the crazy man, in an amazing burst of speed, caught the torch by the tip of his fingers. It seemed that time stood still and then resumed in slow motion as it slipped from the Vampire's fingers and tumbled to the roof and the pools

Mark has Sheriff take the opportunity that Etucid's fall presents to go back to back with Kyle. When Sheriff yells at the fleeing Kindred, Elucid realizes that all their lives are in danger and he motions for Malcolm and Travis to back off.

After forming a temporary truce with the characters, the two toadies of the Prince lead Juggler from the brewery. Stewart indicates to Mark that Elucid is going to follow them out very closely. Both Steve and Lisa agree immediately, so Travis and Malcolm follow suit.

When the Sheriff gets to the roof, he bolts across the gap to the roof of Daley's, yelling for his underlings to torch the roof of the brewery. Kyle follows his leader's cue and bolts too, leaving Juggler on his own. The Gary Vampire disappears into the night. Meanwhile, Elucid and Travis are right on the heels of the Prince's cronies. They jump the gap between the roofs and both succeed, just as a torch is launched from **Daley's** to the brewery.

In a fit of heroics, Malcolm decides to try to catch the torch. Mark tells Lisa that she will need to roll at least 2 successes to totally catch the torch, otherwise it will light the gasoline on fire. The difficulty will be a 9!! This is an example of an extended action. Realizing the perilous straights she has put Malcolm into, Lisa decides to use up a point from Malcolm's Blood Pool (the max you can use in a single turn) for Dexterity. This will give her one extra dice to roll for the rest of the scene. Lisa rolls Dexterity (4) + Athletics (2) + the

The first taste of blood exhilarates Kyle, but realization of his deed crazes him. His first Vessel. His first Frenzy.

of gasoline spread across the tar. "Noooooo," he screamed, and his cry was echoed in the faces of the other Kindred that were piling pell-mell from the rooftop exit. Flames burst all around the druggie, who was now sprinting for the roof of Daley's. Flames engulfed him and his scream echoed through the night. With a sudden burst of energy, he shot across the gap between the two roofs, a flaming comet extinguishing itself as it landed.

A shot rang out and Elucid felt his left arm go numb. With a guttural scream of pain, he wrenched himself free of Sheriff and rolled away. His back hit a wall, and he turned his head in time to see Sheriff climbing down the fire exit. But the man's eyes were focused on another spectacle. Elucid followed the Vampire's line of sight.

Twenty feet away, the boy was struggling with Kyle. They seemed to be evenly matched when, to Elucid' surprise, the little kid picked up the full-grown man and threw him through the skylight. The sound of shattering glass and the thud of the body breaking a table reached Elucid a second later.

Glancing at his shoulder, Elucid could see that it was already healing. With a grunt of effort, he struggled to his feet and moved to the skylight. Below, in the main dinning room of Daley's, all activity had come to a halt as people pointed and whispered at the body that had fallen from the roof. Elucid grinned at the kid as he came up to observe his own handiwork. "Now that was a body toss, proper," is all the boy said.

Elucid glanced back to the body and for the first time noticed the occupants of the table where it had landed. He sucked in his breath and held it. For there, cooly staring up at him with his steel gray eyes was Ballard himself. His eyes riveted Elucid to the spot for a moment and it was only with a desperate push that Elucid was able to draw himself away from those terrible orbs.

Turning quickly away from the skylight, he saw the little black boy and the wild-eyed crazy Kindred looking at him expectantly, waiting for some type of decision. With a shrug of his shoulders, Elucid made his way to the fire escape and growled, "Let's get the hell out of here." In the distance, the sound of sirens could be heard making their way to the brewery. It was turning into some night.

> *The beaten generation, the beaten generation*
> *Reared on a diet of prejudice and mis-information.*
> *The beaten generation, the beaten generation*
> *Open your eyes, open your imagination.*
>
> — The The, *The Beat(en) Generation*

Blood Point (1) for Malcolm but only gets one success. Mark decides that Malcolm catches the torch for a moment, but then loses his grip and drops it onto the roof and the gasoline. The roof immediately goes up in a blaze of fire.

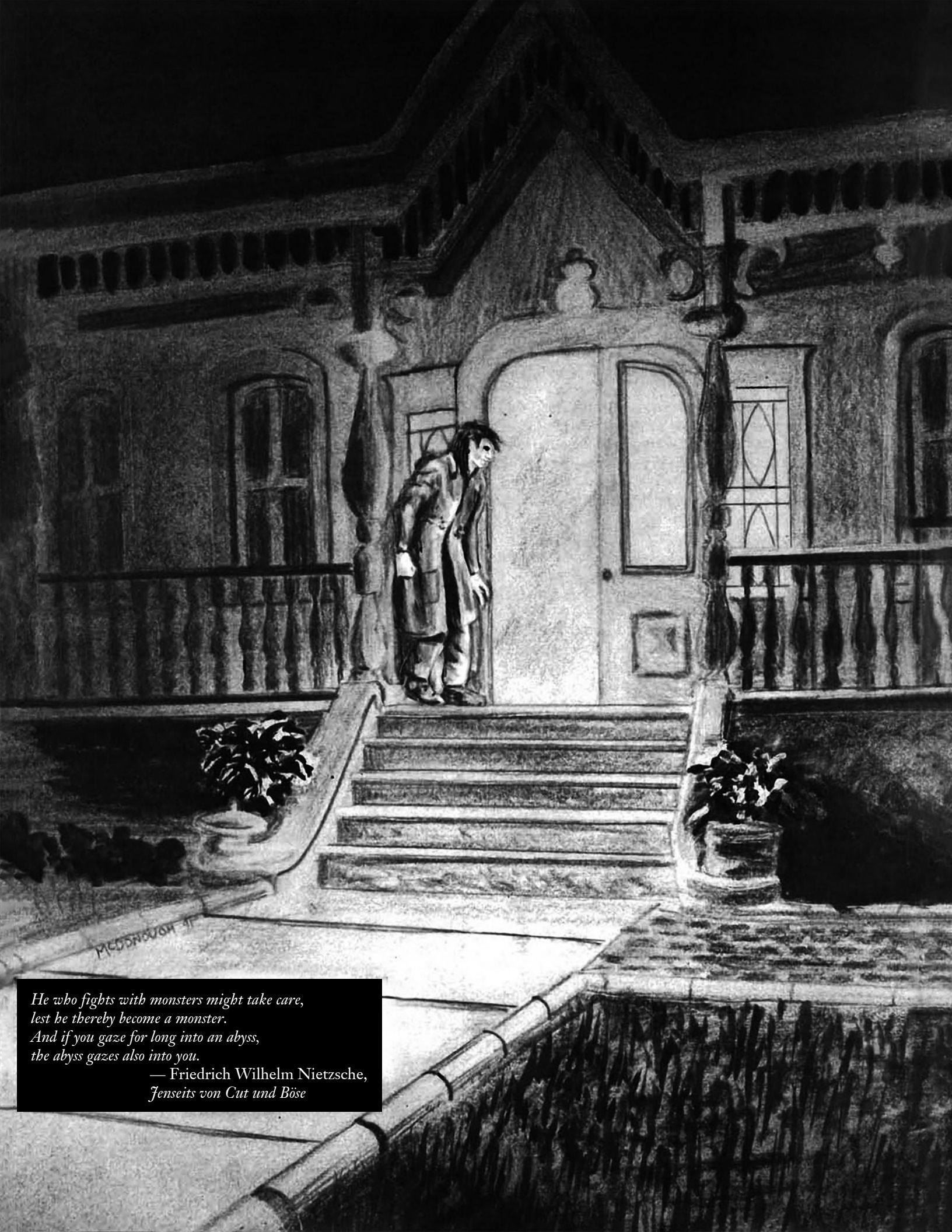
Lisa informs Mark that Malcolm is going to make a dive for the roof of **Daley's**. Since this is a radical departure from Malcolm's previous action of catching the torch, Mark decides that Malcolm will need to roll a cumulative total of 5 successes to get off the roof. For each turn it takes to get those 5 successes, Malcolm will take damage from the fire. To try to extract her bacon from the fire, Lisa decides to use another of Malcolm's Blood Points to put on her Dexterity. This gives her a total of 2 dice to roll due to Blood Pool expenditure (1 from before and 1 now). Mark informs Lisa that Malcolm's task is a difficulty of 7. Lisa rolls 4 successes for Malcolm on a Dexterity (4) + Athletics (2) + Blood Pool (2) roll. Almost!! Mark tells Lisa that Malcolm has taken 2 Health Levels from the fire.

In the meantime, Elucid attempts to Grapple with Sheriff. He rolls one more success than Sheriff and tackles him. Kyle, pulling out a gun, decides to shoot Elucid. Mark rolls Kyle's Dexterity (2) + Firearms (3), with a difficulty of 6 (as determined for Lt. Revolver on the Weapons Chart) + 1 (since Elucid is lying flat), for a total difficulty of 7. He gets one success. For damage, Mark rolls 2 dice (from the Weapons Chart) + the number of successes (1) for a total of 3 dice. The Difficulty is Elucid's Stamina + 3. Mark gets 2 successes. Stewart decides to have Elucid break off combat and run to cover (this also gives him a chance to heal himself with Blood Points).

In the next round, Malcolm makes his final success and leaps the gap between the buildings, extinguishing the flames enveloping his body by rolling around. Elucid rolls behind cover and uses a Blood Point to heal one Health Level. Sheriff heads for the fire escape. Travis decides to grab Kyle from behind and throw him through the skylight. He rolls his Dexterity (4) + Brawl (2) + Potence (2) and rolls 6 successes. This far outstrips Kyle's roll of one success. Mark decides that Kyle goes flying through the skylight.

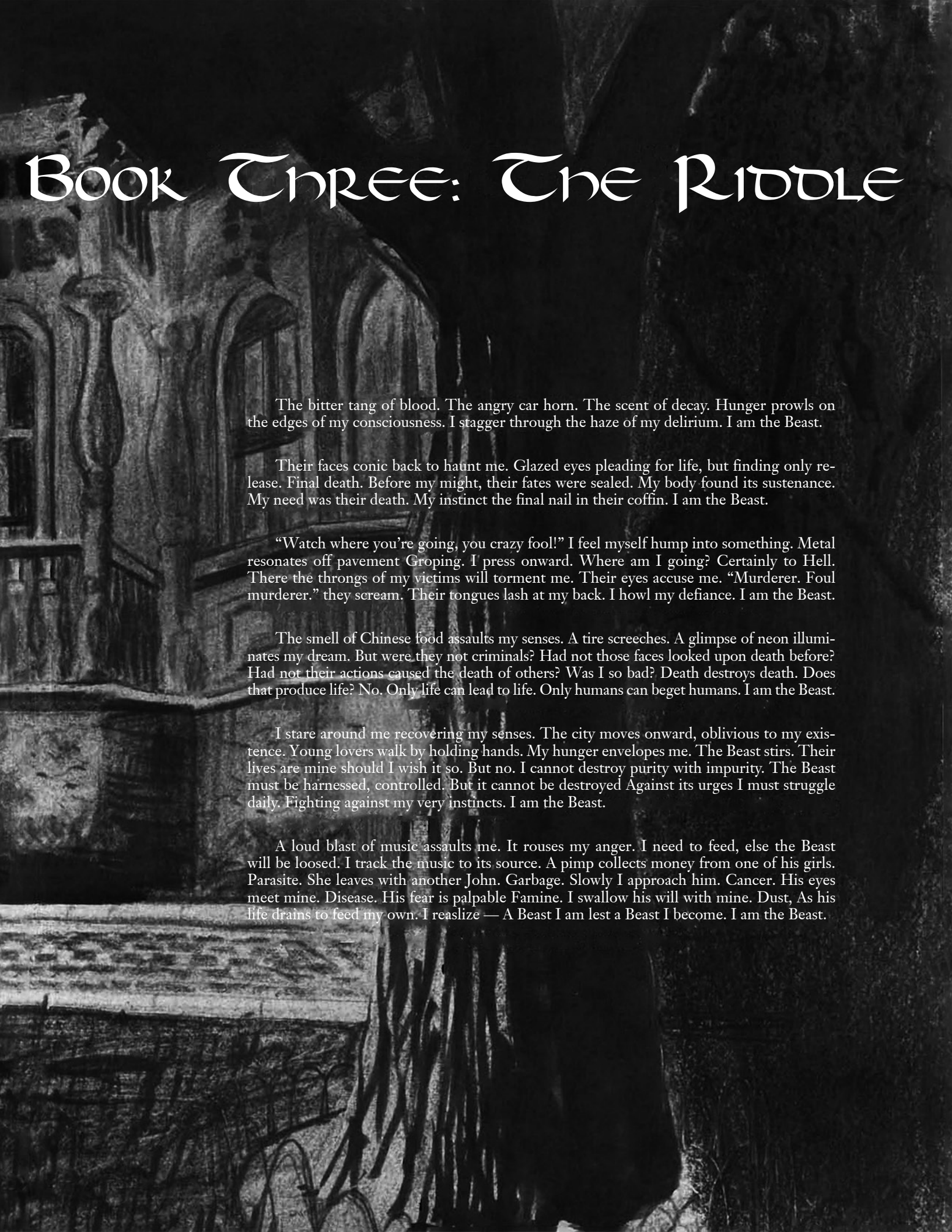
Both Elucid and Travis make their way to the skylight to see what happened to Kyle. They both have Obfuscate of at least 2, so the patrons in the restaurant won't see them unless they do something obvious. However, the man at the table Kyle fell through is looking right at Elucid. It's the Prince! The Prince tries to Dominate Elucid, by making a suggestion, "JUMP!" Mark rolls the Prince's Intimidation (5)+ Manipulation (3), but he only gets 3 successes. Stewart rolls Elucid's Willpower (6) and gets 4 successes. He manages to shake off the Prince's suggestion to jump through the skylight, and so steps back from it, taking him out of eyesight of the Prince.

After backing off and regaining his senses, Elucid motions for Malcolm and Travis to follow him and he leads them down the fire escape and into the sewers — his home turf. It will be harder for the Prince's men to find them down there. The Chronicle has only just begun, for this was just the first scene of the first story.



He who fights with monsters might take care,
lest he thereby become a monster.
And if you gaze for long into an abyss,
the abyss gazes also into you.

— Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche,
Jenseits von Cut und Böse



Book Three: The Riddle

The bitter tang of blood. The angry car horn. The scent of decay. Hunger prowls on the edges of my consciousness. I stagger through the haze of my delirium. I am the Beast.

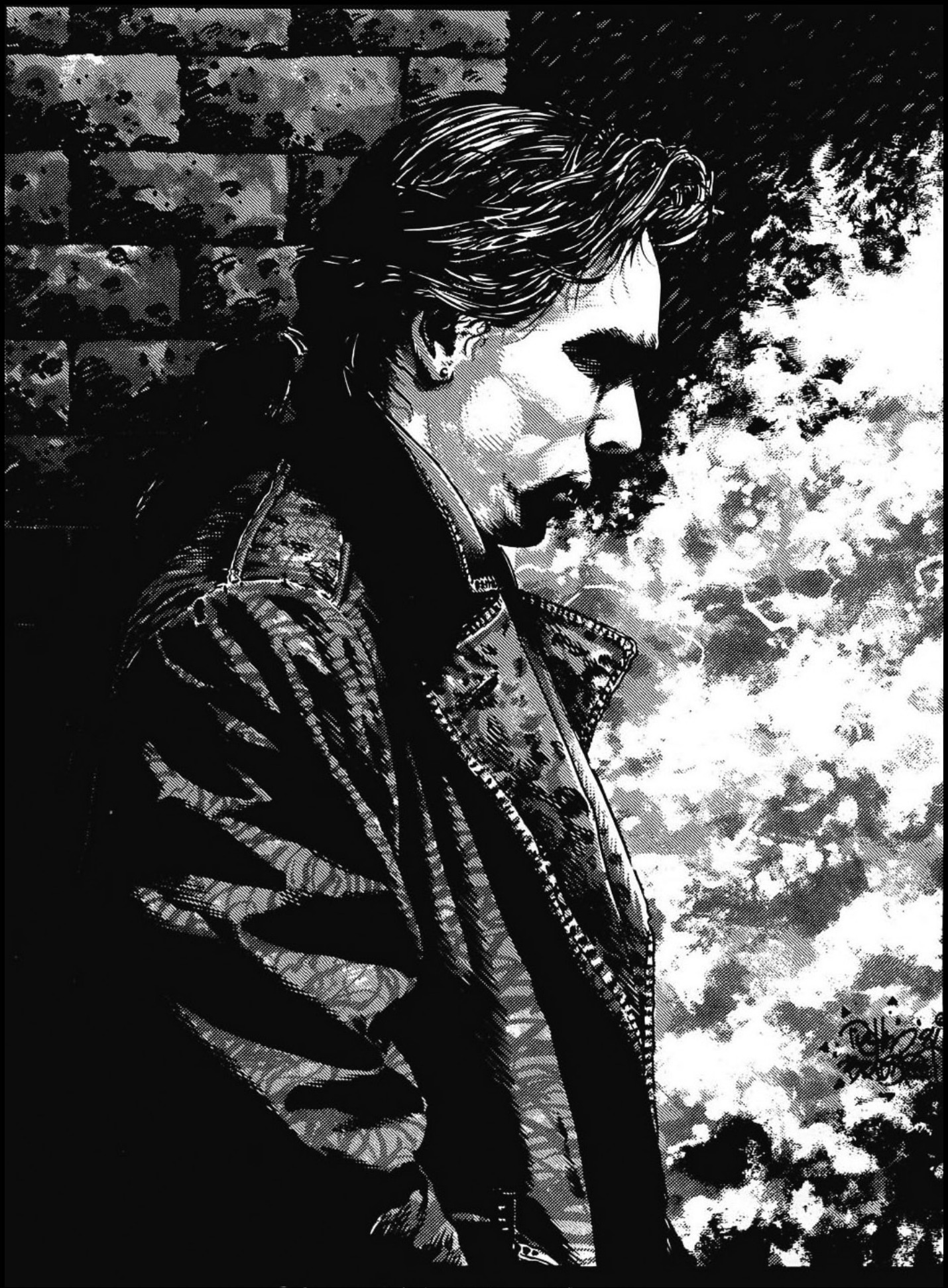
Their faces conic back to haunt me. Glazed eyes pleading for life, but finding only release. Final death. Before my might, their fates were sealed. My body found its sustenance. My need was their death. My instinct the final nail in their coffin. I am the Beast.

"Watch where you're going, you crazy fool!" I feel myself hump into something. Metal resonates off pavement Groping. I press onward. Where am I going? Certainly to Hell. There the throngs of my victims will torment me. Their eyes accuse me. "Murderer. Foul murderer." they scream. Their tongues lash at my back. I howl my defiance. I am the Beast.

The smell of Chinese food assaults my senses. A tire screeches. A glimpse of neon illuminates my dream. But were they not criminals? Had not those faces looked upon death before? Had not their actions caused the death of others? Was I so bad? Death destroys death. Does that produce life? No. Only life can lead to life. Only humans can beget humans. I am the Beast.

I stare around me recovering my senses. The city moves onward, oblivious to my existence. Young lovers walk by holding hands. My hunger envelopes me. The Beast stirs. Their lives are mine should I wish it so. But no. I cannot destroy purity with impurity. The Beast must be harnessed, controlled. But it cannot be destroyed Against its urges I must struggle daily. Fighting against my very instincts. I am the Beast.

A loud blast of music assaults me. It rouses my anger. I need to feed, else the Beast will be loosed. I track the music to its source. A pimp collects money from one of his girls. Parasite. She leaves with another John. Garbage. Slowly I approach him. Cancer. His eyes meet mine. Disease. His fear is palpable Famine. I swallow his will with mine. Dust, As his life drains to feed my own. I reaslize — A Beast I am lest a Beast I become. I am the Beast.



Gangrel (gang' - rel)

Chapter Seven: Setting

And the Lord said unto him, "Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold." And the Lord set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

— Genesis ch. 4, vs. 15

The world of Vampires is not our world. It is a Gothic-Punk™ vision of our world — monolithic, majestic and very twisted. The entire society is corrupt and the mortals are helpless to do anything about it. It is a world where the forces of evil and chaos are even stronger than they are in our world (though that may be hard to believe). In general, there is nothing all that different — CD's are in, vinyl is out, the ozone layer is being depleted, and the same soap operas are still playing. The same faces are on Mount Rushmore and the Lady still stands proudly in New York Harbor. It is a world where Vampires exist, and they direct and have influenced the course of history for some time. It is because of the existence of Vampires in this world that it is different.

The Gothic-Punk world is a metaphor for our own world, a warning of what we might become and a reflection of what we really might be. It is our world the way it might be if there actually were Vampires.

This chapter describes the setting of **Vampire**. A Gothic-Punk reality. However, more than the world of mortals is discussed in this chapter. Vampires have a wide and varied culture and society of their own. Such is the focus here.

The Touch of Death

The Gothic is described by the institutions of the world. The Church is stronger because people always turn to the Church in times of crisis, and enough people have been touched by the Vampires to make a difference. The institutions which the Vampires control tend to be even more conservative and resistant to change than in our world. Such things as architecture still have more of a Gothic flavor to them, and even skyscrapers in this world may have gargoyles on them — or maybe not, it's your choice on how far to go.

The Punk is described in the way people live. The gangs rule the streets and the Mafia has never been reined in. You've got to be tough to survive, and even tougher to get anywhere. The world is more corrupt, more decadent, and less humane than our world. Simply emphasize all that you see wrong in our world, and you've got the Punk half of it.

In the end, it will be you who decides what the Gothic-Punk world is like. The differences are so numerous, yet so subtle, that they are impossible to describe fully in words. It is your job to convey the impression of the Gothic-Punk world in the stories you tell. You can do this through your descriptions, the characters you play, and the stories that you tell. Everything and anything can add to the flavor that is Gothic-Punk.

Streets of Blood

Stealing through the night like a wolf on the prowl.
Not a bird, not a plane. I'm just a mean old night owl.
Watch me...hit...run...gotta move on.
Going wild in the night
Cause I'm hooked on the neon.

— Foreigner, *Night Life*

What is it like to live in a world of perpetual night? To dance under moonlit skies? To lust for the blood of a living, intelligent prey?

City life is as quicksilver as the Vampire itself. Long periods of calm can shift without warning to periods of great strife and turmoil. The Vampire is an animal of twisted emotion and instinct. One Vampire's obsessions and perversions can suddenly bring him into conflict with another. Though the Kindred can live with one another in peace for years, eventually the truce ends and the cannibalistic war begins anew. The Jyhad never truly ends, it only casts a smaller shadow for a time.

Normally, a balance is struck among the Kindred of a city, whether by formal or tacit agreement. Efforts are made to minimize conflicts, though such strife is sometimes unavoidable. When conflict does occur, it is usually carefully hidden beneath the veil of the Masquerade, and is rarely noticed by the mortals of that city. Thus may a war be waged without the Elders fearing chaos.

Many Vampires have no part in the society of the Damned, and maintain absolutely no connection with others

of their kind. They are known as the Clanless, or the Caitiffs. Cities are very large places and it is not difficult to keep apart from the others. It is said that the only Vampires who ever meet are the ones who wish to meet. However, sometimes even the most solitary Vampire can be thrust into the politics of the day — in times of need, any Kindred can be rooted out and questioned. The Justicars are known for rooting out such solitary Kindred to be used as scapegoats for the crimes of others.

Most Vampires work hard to develop a semblance of normality in their lives and escape the sordid truth of their existence. They create an artificial life around themselves, one that is bound to slip away with the passing years, but is pleasurable for the here and now. Some say that a Vampire needs this facade of life to retain his sanity. Falling into the "Vampire-schtick" of the cinema and literature often results in despair and eventual mental disintegration.

It has been put forth by those with learning that much of the mortal psyche survives the Becoming. That psyche, however, becomes overburdened by the supernatural drives, desires, and obsessions of the Vampire. An amount of self-deception is apparently necessary to retain one's sanity. A little sanity, it seems, is better than no sanity at all.

Kyle licks the tears from his cheeks. The taste is more than that of mere salt.

Confinement

By agreement, though some say by nature, the Vampire is a creature of the city. The wilds of the countryside are left to the werewolves and their ilk. This suits most Vampires. Why roam far and wide when a few square blocks of even the smallest city provides more than enough Vessels?

Younger Vampires sometimes feel the need to roam, but that desire seems to slip away as they age. The older Vampire is more likely to have become comfortable in one location and made that their home, or Haven. Those who choose to wander the countryside will almost invariably come into contact with the Lupines. The hatred between the Changers and the Kindred runs deep. Fortunately, modern transportation affords even the weakest Vampire the ability to travel from city to city with only moderate concern.

Thus, the city has become a prison to the Kindred. Though the cities are the center of civilization, and cover entire regions, they are still a cell from which the Kindred is not allowed to leave. The Vampire is trapped as much in life as in spirit. This only increases the tension between the Vampires, and eventually caged animals always turn on one another.

Population

Vampires are a species just as any other animal. They must obey the evolutionary laws as well as the dictates of their own environment. They have a place in the food chain and one could even speculate that they fill an ecological niche. There are, however, limits to how many of their kind that can be supported. When they cross over the limit, natural factors come into effect and bring their population back within its limits. Vampires stand alone among all the species of the world in that there is no creature which preys upon them. So they must regulate their own population. Vampires control their numbers through intense competition. They are their own prey and predator. The Elders know only too well after the terrifying experience of the Inquisition, that too many Vampires will attract the attention of the mortals. It matters not that Vampires are immortal, for Final Death can come to them as well when the weight of the human species is brought to bear.

Thus it is clear that only so many hunters can be supported by the same Herd. Thus, only so many Vampires can live within the same city. Years ago, only one Kindred lived within each city and each could claim a separate municipality as their own Domain. When cities were small, being a race of individuals and loners was an effective survival tactic. However,

as cities have grown, so has the population of Vampires. Now it is no longer rare for many Kindred to live within the same Domain.

A large city such as San Francisco or Frankfurt normally supports a Vampire population of anywhere from twenty to fifty, depending on circumstances in that city. Larger cities like New York or greater London hold a proportionately larger population and smaller cities much less.

As a rule of thumb, assume that at the maximum there is one Vampire for every 100,000 mortals. Thus, the greater Chicago metropolitan area, a region of 7 million mortals, can support nearly 70 Vampires. Often a Prince will artificially regulate how many Kindred reside within the city, thus ensuring the sanctity of the Masquerade.

The cities could certainly hold more Kindred, but there are legitimate concerns over discovery. The Masquerade is always primary in the minds of the Elders — better that some Anarchs die than all be extinguished in another Inquisition. Every care is taken to insure that the existence of Vampires is kept secret from the mortal population. Strict controls are kept over the creation of Neonates. Too many Vampires would increase the probability of discovery dramatically. The population is also restricted by the simple fact that few potential Vampires survive their Becoming, many are driven mad by it and put down by their Sire.

Social Distinctions:

Most musical of mourners, weep again!
Lament anew, Urania! — He died,
Who was the Sire of an immortal strain,
Blind, old and lonely.

— Percy Shelley, *Adonais*

There are a number of different social castes among the Kindred. For the most part, Vampires are distinguished by their age (indeed social status is designated by descriptions of age), but there is some social mobility other than the privileges gained by age. The Elders only trust those who have proven themselves, and the best way to prove oneself is to survive a few hundred years. It is the Elders who hold the power, so it is the Elders who determine who is accorded respect and status.

The highest status is that accorded to the Antediluvians, the Third Generation. The lowest is that afforded the Childer and the Autarkis.

Caitiff: Though many Caitiff are Clanless but are otherwise "normal" Vampires, others have become so degenerate that they feed only off the weak and the dying. Some Caitiff live apart from Vampire society on purpose, but most have been cast out. Some Caitiff were once a part of Kindred society, but have lost so much Humanity that they are unable to maintain discourse with any other creatures. They know only survival, and live from day to day in search of food. Eventually they will die, but it may take many years. The Caitiff are the homeless of the Kindred. (Status 0)

Childe: Vampires of this class have not yet been introduced to the Prince, nor have they been released from their Sire. They are not considered to be full members of Vampire society and are thus afforded no respect. They are in short, treated as children. The term is sometimes used out of contempt. Kindred who have committed especially stupid acts, may be called and considered Childer. (normally have a Status of 0)

Neonate: These Vampires have been newly released and presented to the Prince, though they have not yet made their mark. The Neonate is the caste of youngest Vampires who have been released by their Sire. If they behave themselves and do not seek the status of Anarch, they eventually will become Ancilla, usually after 50 to 100 years. (normally have a Status of 1)

Anarch: The Anarchs have status because they are noticed and respected for what little power they have achieved. They are recognized for their energy, drive, and consistency. Though they are the enemies of the Elders and especially the Prince, they are still respected — especially by the younger Kindred. By rebelling against society, they have given themselves an identity. (normally have a Status of 1-2)

Ancilla: These Kindred are still young, but they have proven themselves to the Elders. This is the middle age between Neonate and Elder, where the Vampire is given increasing respect and power. Often the Brood of a Prince will be considered Ancilla, though they may be younger than the average Ancilla. Anarchs are never considered Ancilla, no matter what age they become. (normally have a Status of 2)

Elder: When Vampires reach a certain age, there are few who stand above them who still hold power in Vampire society. The Elders are the Kindred who are in control and who seek to dominate all the others. The Elders are normally between 200 and 1000 years old, but like all things undead, this can vary immensely. In Europe, you have to be much older and more powerful to be considered an Elder, than you do in the "New World." (normally have a Status of 2-5)

Methuselah: When a Vampire reaches an age, somewhere between 1000 and 2000 immortal years, a profound change invariably comes over him. It has long been argued whether it is a mystical or biological change, or if somehow it is a social change brought about by changing needs and motivations. Certainly, by the time a Vampire reaches this age, a boredom or even melancholy sets in, as well as an increased desire to prolong her existence. All those who are weak, take risks, or unconsciously desire suicide do not survive to this age — only the very strongest survive. Thus, as a means of self-protection, they retreat from the world and those younger than them. The constant struggle of facing the young reckless ones, who seek power through the blood of

their Elders, grows numbing. Eventually one of the Anarchs will get lucky and dispatch the Elder. Thus the only option is to retreat fully from society, and enter the Inconnu. Some Methuselahs remain involved in power struggles and the Jyhad of the Kindred, but do so from complete anonymity. (normally have a Status of 5-9)

Antediluvian: These are the oldest of the Vampires, and they are the most powerful creatures in the world (excepting Caine). When they do involve themselves in the affairs of Kindred, they seldom leave things untarnished by their touch. The mere word of an Antediluvian is enough to provoke enormous strife and conflict among the Kindred. Their eternal struggle, the Jyhad, affects all the Kindred. (Status of 10)

The Prince

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand? Come let me clutch thee:
I have thee not, and yet I see thee still.
Art thou not, fatal vision, sensible
To feeling as to sight? or art thou but
A dagger of the mind, a false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain?

— William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*

The modern age, the last half-thousand years by Kindred reckoning, has produced a new form of rulership. Once the Third Generation ceased to rule, the Kindred accepted no rulers — each ruled their own city and did not try to dominate the others. They may have given themselves titles and honors, but it was not important for there was none but mortals to impress. However, with the growing size of the cities and the coming of true power among the Elders has come the Princes — the rulers of the most independent and solitary of all creatures. The term Prince, though often used with contempt, is used to refer to the Elders who hold Domain over any urban, metropolitan area.

In the days of old there were no Princes, for there was no need of them. Each Kindred would live alone in a city and make it their private Domain. As cities grew larger, it became possible for them to support more than one Vampire — many could live in the same place. After the Inquisition, the importance of the Masquerade had been imprinted in the minds of the Elders, and they increasingly distrusted the younger Vampires, whom they called Anarchs. The revolt of the ones called the Sabbat was the source of much of their distrust, for they feared that it could happen again. The Neonates being created by the 18th century were the children of a modern age, and alien to the minds of the Elders. After an incident in London in 1743 where the Masquerade was broken by an Anarch, the Camarilla decided to formally acknowledge what had already been fact for many centuries — the power of the Prince.

In formal terms, a Prince holds the power of Domain and is the one who can make the laws and is responsible for keeping order. In practical terms, the Prince is merely the one who is dominant and best able to keep the Anarchs in their place. In the beginning, the most dominant Vampire of each city simply claimed Domain. Over time, however, Traditions have grown around the making and keeping of that claim. The Camarilla has codified and enforced these Traditions.

The term "Prince" is simply that, a term. It is not a titular holding, nor a hereditary position of any kind. In fact, many Kindred object to the use of the term Prince for those very reasons. It is simply the name and the assumption of rights that a powerful Vampire might assume. Not all cities even have Princes, indeed some are ruled by councils. The modern term of Prince is a throw-back to the age when each Kindred was the secret ruler over the city in which she lived, a practice most common in medieval Italy. In some places, terms such as Duke, Baron or Count (in their culturally correct forms) are used.

The Prince does not truly reign over a city, rather she oversees it. Above all else, the Prince is the final arbiter of disputes between the Kindred in her city and responsible for ensuring that the Masquerade is preserved. To the minds of the Elders, this means that the Prince must suppress and persecute the Anarchs. The Kindred in the city owe the Prince no oath of fealty and must obey only as much as their cowardice demands. When the rule of a Prince is questioned or thwarted, the Prince must use force to maintain control. If he does not have enough power, then his rule is at an end. There are some Princes who do not understand the informality of their position; they believe themselves Kings and hold to much protocol and regal ritual. The arrogance of some Princes is more than can be borne, but it is understandable — who but the insane or the truly egotistical would want such a dangerous position?

Many Kindred in fact ignore the Prince, just as they ignore all Vampires. The Caitiff do not have anything to do with other Kindred. Though some Princes considered them little more than Autarkis, most Kindred leave Caitiffs to their lonely lives. As long as they do not break the Traditions or the laws set by the Prince, the Caitiff are left strictly alone.

The powerful beings who together comprise the Inconnu, and many of the Elders, are not impressed by such idle pronouncements of power. They see the title as representative of the arrogance of one still young enough to lust for power. The Prince is not an authority to whom they would bow. When they visit a city, it is to them that the Prince would bow, if the Prince is wise.

Selection

The Prince is traditionally the eldest of the Kindred in the city, though this is no longer common. The method of

the assumption of power varies from city to city, and Prince to Prince. It is normally quite informal and the individual with the most power and ambition will eventually be able to hold their claim unchallenged. Normally, they must gather the support of the Elders of the city, who seek after only peace and the preservation of the Masquerade. These Elders are commonly known as the Primogen. Once an individual has enough Elders on his side, the city may be taken.

Anyone is allowed to make the claim of Prince, but only when none opposes them are they assumed to hold Domain over the city. If there is a challenge, the contenders must war between one another until superiority is determined. This can be a very dangerous period, as the warfare can spill over into the mortal realm and threaten the Masquerade. This is why the Elders so rarely change sides, or divide their support among two or more contenders.

This warfare is not as simple as a duel, or even any sort of direct combat. It is, like all conflicts between Vampires, a part of the great Jyhad in that it is a progression of games and maneuvers, tricks and threats, violence and bloodshed. The various Elders, Broods and Coteries ally themselves to one side or the other — either out of strong personal belief, promises of great reward, or threats of retaliation. Frequently, mortal institutions that are under the control of the Vampire, such as the Police, Banks or the Media, may be employed in the war. Almost always, the process ends with the death of one combatant or the other. It is rare that the winner is magnanimous, and even if she were, the long-sighted Elders would not allow it.

Coups are difficult due to the fact that the Prince is personally very powerful and nearly always creates a Brood to help protect him. Another consideration for a would-be insurgent is that taking on the Prince usually means taking on the Elders of the city. The Elders, when united, have enough power to defeat all comers.

Many Elders invariably support the existing Prince, simply because they do not wish to risk turmoil. They have grown protective of their long lives, and they do all that they

He feels a stranger to his own home. The torrent of thoughts, urges and desires cannot be smothered.

can to provide themselves with a stable environment. They are extremely conservative in all that they do, for they seek only to survive, not to evoke change.

This group of Elders has become known as the Primogen, and the term has become synonymous with stick-in-the-mud among the Anarchs. With the support of the Primogen, it is nearly impossible to successfully challenge a Prince, for the Primogen will direct their influence, followers and even personal powers to do the will of the Prince. Though many may try to challenge the Prince, almost all are destroyed before they even begin.

Thus, is it possible to rule the Damned. Princes have been known to voluntarily surrender their position, though this rarely occurs. Princes tend to be old, and Elders have the tendency to become rooted to one location.

Politics

The power-politics around the Prince can be quite dynamic, especially when more than one Elder is present and attempting to sway the decisions of the Prince. Each may attempt to threaten, cajole and even trick the Prince into doing things their way, all the while feigning disinterest in the whole sickly affair of politics. The Elders do not dare push things to the point where the Prince is overthrown, but they will play the game very close to the edge. The Jyhad exists on more than one level, and many different Generations play this sort of game.

He must touch his son to see that his old life created something that will last.

By dwelling within a city overseen by a Prince, a Vampire must accept certain obligations. The city provides a certain security that all within benefit from, and to maintain that security, certain rules of behavior are to be followed. In one form or another, most of these rules are nearly universal. They are known as the Traditions, and they are the oldest laws known to the Kindred — it is the Prince who enforces them. Kindred relocating from San Francisco to Moscow can rightfully assume that these Traditions apply. Ignorance is no defense.

The Anarchs rebel against all the strictures of the Elders, their hated enemies, which are represented by the Prince's power. These Fledglings believe that there is little to fear in the modern world, and that the old superstitions and Traditions should be thrown away. Some believe that the Masquerade is the incarnation of the terror of Kindred grown too old and too fearful. The Prince must constantly work to keep the Anarchs in line, and prevent them from creating any disruption in the Masquerade. Sometimes threats are not enough.

Most Anarchs do not believe that there is any such thing as Gehenna, and many doubt that the original Vampire was Caine. They simply do not believe these legends, and treat them as they do the stories of a Garden of Eden and the Tower of Babel. They suspect that the Elders use such stories to put fear into Ancilla, to control them all the better. Among the Anarchs, it is considered bad form to admit to any faith in such myths. They chafe against the restraint placed by the Elders, and have not yet learned the wisdom of age. The Fledglings are largely powerless within Vampire society, so it is no wonder that they rebel. The modern age has wrought much change in the soul of humanity, and it is from these humans that the new Vampire comes. With future changes in modern culture, many are expecting a wave of increasingly rebellious Anarchs. Some within the Camarilla have called for a stop to the creation of all new Vampires, but it is unlikely that any sort of ban could ever be enforced. Most Elders simply trust that natural factors will take their course and that the most radical of the Anarchs will be wiped out before they can give the Vampire community away.

Advantages of Princedom

The Characters may eventually seek the position of Prince. There are a number of advantages to it which might not be readily apparent. They are described below.

• Right to Breed. The Prince is the only Vampire who is able to freely create Progeny. No others have this freedom, unless the Prince grants it to them. You have a powerful

control over other Vampires, for most, at some point, wish to create a Childe.

• Backing of the Elders. The Primogen will support you as long as you maintain the Masquerade and suppress the wilder stirrings of the Anarchs.

• Political power within the Camarilla. You have greatly increased status (raise to 5 when you become the Prince), and are listened to by most Elders.

• Right to question and restrict all those who enter your Domain. It is your Traditional right to exert controls over all Kindred who enter you terrain, and they must report to you when they first arrive in it. If they do not, it is considered within your rights to punish them.

• Freedom to feed from any mortals within your Domain. You are also able to limit (for the good of the city) the feeding of others. In the name of protecting the Masquerade, you may place restrictions on some or all of the Kindred who live within the city. Usually this affects where and from whom they may feed. If they disobey, you may determine that they have broken the Masquerade and punish them accordingly.

• Power over your enemies. Because the Prince is allowed to call a Blood Hunt, you have the power of life-and-death over those who cross you. You are not allowed to kill at will, but if you determine that any have broken the Traditions, you may punish them accordingly.

The Traditions

Now this is the Law of the Jungle —
as old and as true as the sky;
And the Wolf that shall keep it may prosper,
but the Wolf that shall break it must die.

— Rudyard Kipling, *The Law of the Jungle*

The Traditions are the age-old laws of the Kindred, passed down from the early days following the Kin-slaying. They are not formally written down, but they are known by all Kindred nevertheless. There are many variations, based on what part of the world one is in when one hears them spoken. The words may vary, but the intent endures.

When the Traditions are recalled at Conclaves of the Camarilla, they are recited as if spoken by a Sire to a Fledgling. Indeed, it has become something of a Tradition for them to be the final words a Sire speaks to his Progeny before they are released. In the moments before they are to be presented to the Prince — the Sire speaks of these things to the Fledgling. Though the Neonate may know of the Traditions already, the words are still spoken. It is an important element of the ritual.

The First Tradition

Honor one another's Domain. When thou comest to a foreign city, thou shalt present thyself to the one who ruleth there. Without the word of acceptance, thou art nothing.

The Second Tradition

Thy Domain is thine own concern. All others owe thee respect while in it. None may challenge thy word while in thy Domain.

The Third Tradition

Thou shalt only Sire another with the permission of thine Elder. If thou shalt create another without thine Elder's leave, both thou and thy Progeny shall be slain.

The Fourth Tradition

Those thou Create are thine own children. Until thy Progeny shalt be Released, thou shalt command them in all things. Their sins are thine to endure.

The Fifth Tradition

Thou shalt not reveal thy true nature to those not of the blood. Doing such shalt renounce thy claims of blood.

The Sixth Tradition

Thou art forbidden to destroy another of thy kind. The right of destruction belongeth only to thine Elder. Only the Eldest among thee shalt call the Blood Hunt.

Many Elders maintain that these Traditions were originally conceived by Caine himself when he Sired the Second Generation of Kindred. Thus, it is possible that these words are those of the Ancient one himself, as he spoke them to his own Progeny. However, it is far more likely that they were created by the Antediluvians, as they attempted to restrict their own Progeny in the ways they themselves were not controlled. The Tradition of secrecy is likely to have existed for some time, though in much more diluted form. It was not until the Inquisition that it was reaffirmed and its wording and intent strengthened.

It should be pointed out that many of the Traditions below are couched in fairly formal terms. These are the words and phrases of the Elders, and not necessarily how they would

be expressed by the Anarchs. The younger Kindred see these "Traditions" in an entirely different light.

The few sections following are the most common versions of the Traditions known:

The First Tradition: Acceptance

Though Vampires are loathe to travel (the risks are tremendous), they occasionally do. Ancient custom dictates that when entering a new Domain, a city claimed by an Elder, the newcomers must present themselves to the Elder. This was so even before there were Princes, in a time where there was only one Kindred in each city. It was simply a Tradition of politeness; you knock before entering.

It is a procedure varying in formality from location to location, and even Prince to Prince. Some require formal presentation and a reciting of Lineage, such as it is known. Others are happy simply if contact is made with an underling. Those who do not bother to present themselves had better have the power to withstand the anger of the Prince.

Over time, this Tradition has become a primary means for the Prince to maintain power, for it gives them the right to question all who enter their Domain. They may not have power to expel the more formidable interlopers, but it is acknowledged as their right to question all.

Some Kindred bristle at the thought of having to 'present' themselves for acceptance. Many are too proud and have a strong independent streak. The Anarchs have too little respect for the Traditions, and the Methuselahs have too little respect for the Princes. The Methuselahs see themselves as demigods towering above the mortals around them and needing to bow to none. To them, abasing oneself before another is unthinkable. They come from the time before the Princes ruled, and can see beyond the Prince, knowing who pulls the strings.

Many Kindred never present themselves, choosing instead to truly live in darkest obscurity. They hide in the cold, quiet places and rarely venture forth. They are tolerated as long as their obscurity remains. The Nosferatu are the best at this, for their powers sponsor such activities. They are known as the Autarkis, for they refuse to become a part of Vampire society.

The Prince has the right to refuse acceptance in his Domain to any he chooses. This rarely occurs, except when the newcomer is one of poor reputation, or has gathered many enemies. Even those who do not present themselves at all, but are later discovered are not often chased from the city. They are roughly presented to the Prince, shown their place, and released into the streets once again.

The Second Tradition: Domain

This Tradition has fallen away as the population of the cities has risen so dramatically. Individual Vampires no longer claim Domain, but leave the rights of such to the Prince.

Now, only the most powerful Vampires in the city can claim Domain over it. They do so according to the Tradition, and pretend that all others live there only at the pleasure of the Prince. Princes claim they possess the cities, and in most ways, they do. This Tradition is used by them to support their claims. It is what is seen as giving a Vampire the right to claim they are Prince.

There is a prevalent misconception among Anarchs that Princes give different portions of their Domain to a favored associate as their "turf." Though a Prince only allows certain trusted Kindred to watch over portions of the city, this has only increased the cry for the rights of Domain. Increasing numbers of Kindred are claiming "turf" within the city and treating it as their own private hunting ground. Broods or even solitary Kindred stake claim to certain prime areas of the city (such as slum areas) and attempt to prevent other Kindred from feeding there. Though the city is vast enough to make such claims have little value, they seem to have a special worth to these downtrodden Anarchs. Few if any Princes actually grant territory, but that is not enough to prevent the Anarchs from taking it for themselves.

Some of the younger Kindred have made attempts to revive the Traditions of Domain, seeing in it a similarity to some of the mechanics of organized crime. Small gangs will often attempt to establish turf within a city, often in opposition to the other Kindred of the city. It often becomes a difficult situation, with the fear of strife looming over everyone's heads. Because of this, gang problems within a city can grow to endanger the Masquerade. If the gang supports the Prince, they may be tolerated, or they may have the power to resist all attempts to dislodge them. Elders do not like to confront gangs of Anarchs. Though the Elders possess superior power, there is too much risk of death.

The Anarchs mostly fight among themselves over turf, and do not attempt to prevent Elders from feeding on their turf. Their activities are frowned upon by the Prince, but as long as they do not threaten the Masquerade and do not get out of control, Anarchs are allowed to continue. Indeed, many Princes view it as a means of using the Anarchs to suppress themselves, and will take actions to increase the fighting.

In cities where the Prince does not have a firm grasp on power, certain Elders may claim Domain on an area within the city. Their power may be respected by other Primogen, and they may be tolerated by the Prince if they in turn support the Prince. The establishment of one or more Domains within a city can create powerful political dynamics, as those Domains, intentionally or not, create rival power bases. In fact, some Princes are only the leaders of a group of equals,

the chairman of a committee of Elders who each stake their own claim to a Domain within the city.

Regardless of whether one has claimed Domain or not, each Kindred is to some degree responsible for the area around his Haven or the area where he frequents. They rarely involve themselves in mortal concerns, but the affairs of the supernatural are another story. Kindred are expected to report details of strange events that occur near them to the Prince.

The Third Tradition: The Becoming

Traditionally, one's Elder was one's Sire, though a looser interpretation has evolved in recent times. Many Princes have put forth that they are the Elder referred to in this Tradition and refuse all who dwell within their Domain the right of Creation without permission. They insist on their approval before any mortal is Embraced and often kill those who disobey. Most Kindred obey, but more out of fear than respect. In situations where a Neonate has already been created, the Prince may claim the individual as their own, may declare them and their Sire outcast, or may even put them both to death. The Camarilla officially supports the right of a Prince to restrict the creation of new Vampires, understanding that it is the only way to control the population of Anarchs.

Those of the Old World, the Europeans, are even stricter on this point than the upstart Americans. One's Sire must be consulted, and if a Prince has claimed Domain over the area where one has their Haven, you must seek permission from her as well. No amount of tolerance is given to those who do not do so.

The Fourth Tradition: The Accounting

One who Sires a Childe is responsible for that Childe's existence. If the Childe is unable to endure the burden of its new existence, then it is the Sire's responsibility to take care of the matter. If the Childe attempts to betray the Kindred and threaten the Masquerade, it is up to the Sire to prevent him. While still a Childe, under the direct care of one's Sire, a Vampire has no rights.

If a Childe takes actions that threaten the security of others of the Blood, it is the Sire who is held responsible. The Sire is therefore placed in a position where he must carefully weigh the maturity of those he has spawned. He does not want to remain responsible for them forever, though extremely long Childehoods are not unknown, but at the same time he does not want to release the Childe before he is ready.

Long ago, release involved introducing the Childe to ones own Sire, but that has since changed to introducing the Childe to the Prince in who's Domain the Sire and the Childe dwell. Until that time, the Prince is under no obligation, unless he chooses otherwise, to recognize the Childe as one of the Blood. Unless the Sire protects the Childe, any may kill or feed from it.

Following the release, the Childe-no-more is allowed to dwell in the city with full rights. This introduction process is similar to the Tradition of Acceptance already mentioned. If the Prince does not accept, the Childe must leave and find some other city in which to live.

The release is a great rite of passage, for the Sire no longer retains any responsibility for the Childe. It is the activity of the Childe-no-more that determines if he is accepted as a full member of the community and considered a Neonate. If he continues to be rash and foolish, he remains a Childe in the eyes of all. If he shows the wisdom his new existence demands, they are afforded the respect given to an "adult."

The Fifth Tradition: Secrecy

This Tradition is the heart of what has become known as the Masquerade. Tradition demands that the knowledge of the existence of true Vampires be kept from mortal man. To reveal such to them would place the Kindred in dire jeopardy.

His wife stirs as he enters.

Their embrace makes him feel human again, but he knows it cannot last.

Violation of this Tradition is the gravest offense a Vampire can commit. The strengths and resources of mortal man in the modern age are such that were man and Kindred to fall into conflict, the survival of the Kindred would be in question. In more superstitious times, this Tradition was less revered.

To violate this Tradition is to risk destruction of one's self and all of the Kindred.

The Sixth Tradition: Destruction

This Tradition has caused more controversy than any other, and reinterpretations are continually being discussed. It seems to imply that the right of destruction is limited to one's own bloodline. Only the Sire has the right to destroy his Progeny.

However, the shift in meaning of the word 'Elder' has resulted in most Princes claiming this right over all those who dwell within their Domain. They claim that only they have the power of life-and-death, and for the most part their claim has been supported by the Camarilla. The correctness of this claim is the source of the controversy between many of the older and younger Vampires.

Most Princes strictly enforce their monopoly on the Tradition of destruction. All others are forbidden to destroy other Kindred. If a Vampire is ever caught in such an act of "murder," then no punishment may be considered too severe. Often the perpetrator of such a deed will be destroyed themselves. The Prince will usually investigate the deaths of those who have been destroyed in order to find the killer. Of course, the higher the status of the one extinguished, the harder the hunt for his murderer.

Only in times of great strife do younger Vampires dare slay each other, though the Elders are said to do such all the time. If you do intend to hunt down and slay another of the Kindred, you had best step carefully.

Most often, the Prince enforces his right of destruction by calling a Blood Hunt, which is discussed below. Only if a Prince openly calls a Blood Hunt is he allowed to slay one of the Kindred.

Hurled headlong flaming from th' ethereal sky
With hideous ruin and combustion down
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
In adamantine chains and penal fire.

— John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

Blood Hunt

The Traditions do not stand alone, for there has always been a system of punishment for those who transgress them — the Blood Hunt. Those who break the Traditions and thus endanger the other Kindred are hunted down and slain

by all those who hear the call. This Tradition of retribution is known as the Lextalionis by the Elders.

When Kindred strife becomes sufficiently intense that the mortals would have to be blind not to notice, steps must be taken. The usual course of events involves the other Vampires of the city attempting to convince those involved in the Kindred strife to control themselves. In most circumstances, this is usually successful. The natural reticence of the Vampires to involve themselves in the private business of their brethren often means that the strife reaches the flash point before steps are taken to end it. When this occurs, the Blood Hunt is the only recourse.

Tradition demands that a Blood Hunt can only be called by the eldest of the Kindred. In modern times, this eldest is often the Prince of the city. Other Elders or even Ancillas could call for a Hunt, but many might not respond, and they risk the wrath of the Prince. Normally, a Prince will only call a Hunt over a breach of one of the Six Traditions. If they call it for anything else, they risk losing the support of the Ancilla, and gaining the distrust of the Elders. If they call the Hunt purely to support their own cause, then no one will follow them in the stalking, and they will lose considerable Status. Calling a Blood Hunt is no minor matter, perhaps because among the immortals, Final Death is such a major matter.

Assisting one upon whom the Hunt has been called is considered a serious insult to the Prince. Betraying the offender is often the only recourse to having the Blood Hunt called on oneself as well. Sometimes a Prince will be insulted if a Kindred does not participate in the Hunt itself, and will insist that all those who live within the city participate in it. If the Prince is powerful enough, and the crime great enough, he will have the power to enforce his word.

Before the imagery becomes too ingrained, it should be pointed out that the Hunt is not truly a formal hunt. The Vampires do not gather in a convenient park, with their packs of frothing hellhounds, and then set off across the city once the Prince blows a horn. It is more informal and far more serious than that. The Vampires spread out over the city and scour the streets for the individual whom they pursue, and then call in others once they track him down. The Hunt is performed as a great search through the city, but in the tradition of the Kindred it is a secretive and stealthy hunt. Mortals will only sense that it is a strange night, full of strange happenings. If the Police are controlled by the Prince, they will either be pulled back from the streets, or may even assist in the search (without realizing what they are searching for).

The Hunt should be viewed as a violent form of excommunication. Often the subject is hunted down, maimed, and then released outside the perimeter of the city. The Kindred against whom the Hunt is called become *persona non grata*. Any who find the offender has the right, in the Prince's name, to conduct summary justice upon the outcast. They may also partake of the offender's Blood. This is why it is often the youngest of the Kindred who are the most avid pursuers in the Hunt.

Hunts are not called lightly. Most Kindred can count on one hand the number of Blood Hunts they have heard of, let alone participated in. Since the Age Of Enlightenment, the calling of a Blood Hunt usually involves an informal tribunal of sorts. Evidence is presented to the Prince for and against the alleged offender. The offender himself may plead his case, under a free passage assurance from the Prince. Often, the threat of the tribunal, and the beginning of its proceedings are enough to diffuse situations that have already progressed too far. Tradition dictates, however, that once a Blood Hunt has been called, it cannot be stopped.

An outcast may attempt to flee the city he is in and find refuge elsewhere. Many Princes will offer this alternative to the offender in place of calling the Hunt. Though the outcast may flee, the Hunt remains permanently called in that city, regardless of who comes to power in the future.

She is the one who must judge him; she must see what he has become and what he has done. She who knew him best.

The Hunt is usually the business of the Kindred of that city alone, and word of it rarely travels far. In some cases, however, the crimes of the outcast have been so heinous that emissaries have been sent to the Princes of other cities so that a Hunt may be called there as well. The most famous example of this was following the Whitechapel, England slayings of the latter half of the nineteenth century. A Hunt was called against the offender in nearly all of Europe and much of North America. The culprit, however, remains unapprehended.

"There was what could only be described as a metaphysical stench about him. It was quite odd. I'd sensed him almost as soon as he'd entered the hall. It took me only a few moments to find him, standing off to the side, obscured by a sea of signs and placards. I'd have thought that the emotions within and without that place would have concealed him: that effect was certainly what I was counting on.

Nonetheless, there he was. I was cautious and quickly came to believe that I was all but invisible to him, though his body language told me he knew he was being watched. I took him to be old, and powerful, but there was something else.

It was only later, after consulting with some others, that I realized what had occurred. He was of the bloodline Lasombra; one of the Black Hand. I had sensed the Devil's touch on him. I have wondered since if he had anything to do with the horrible things that happened out in the streets that night."

—William Bisogne, Chicago 1968.

He looks at her a final time, but when their eyes meet, he feels her will slip away. His body chills and he cannot move.

Bloodlines

She slipped up on daylight
Night is the best companion.
I heard them talking.

— Judy Bats, *She Lives in a Time of Her Own*

Many of the modern thinkers, the ones who call themselves sociologists, argue that the modern age has brought the beginning of the end of concerns over ties of faith, nation, and blood. Certainly, for the Vampire, the concerns of faith and nation are as dead as ever, but none care more dearly for the ties of blood.

Those of the Blood seem to be loners by nature, even though the need of structure seems to tug at them as strongly as it does mortals. This is most evident in the importance of Lineage to the Kindred. Much of the respect one is due is based on the identity of their Sire, and their Sire's Sire, and so on. Even the most childish of Kindred are entitled to some respect if their lineage is of good blood.

The importance of Lineage has become diluted amongst the recent Generations since the advent of the Camarilla. Their connections to Elders of import are lessened by the many Generations between them. They have lost respect for the Elders, and, as one might expect, many of the Elders resent that. Many Kindred created in this century know little of their Lineage and seem to care even less.

Still, within the world there are still a number of important bloodlines. Each can be traced directly to an Elder, most likely of the Third Generation. While the Founder of the bloodline may no longer exist, or has at least dropped from sight, much of the power of the line remains. Remember, the greater the power of one's Sire, the greater one's own power. Bloodlines of power sometimes have special gifts and curses associated with them that others do not have. See the Traits chapter for more details on roleplaying characters from the Clans (page 67).

The following seven Clans are all associated with the Camarilla, and will be of primary import to your Chronicle.

The other Clans are either confined to the cities which the Sabbat controls or in a Clan stronghold.

Brujah:

The Brujah can trace their roots back to ancient Babylonia. They have not always been perceived as such a strongly rebellious Clan. Indeed, for a time it is said that the Clan secretly controlled the Carthaginian culture. Once Carthage was destroyed by Rome, the Brujah decided that they would never again become dominant. Thus, the Elders of the Brujah are almost the only advocates of the Anarchs, since it is one of the only matters upon which they agree. For the last millennium, the Brujah have become the rebels among the Kindred — forever questioning and testing the Traditions. If reminded of their imperial past, the Brujah will either become extremely angry, or be unaware of what the questioner is speaking of. The Brujah live for the day, not the past.

Gangrel:

Clan Gangrel is said to be the only Clan whose founder is still involved in and concerned with the welfare of her Progeny. Her concern for them is matched only by her concern for her mortal descendents — The Gypsies. Though many Antediluvians use their Progeny in their schemes and maneuvers of the Jyhad, the Gangrel pride themselves on their freedom from such manipulation. There is a close bond between the Clan and the Gypsies. In recent years, as the Gehenna approaches, their interaction has been considerable.

Malkavian:

The history of the Malkavian Clan is completely shrouded in the past. The Malkavians themselves have many tales about from whence they came, but even they do not believe most of them. A favored legend among the Kindred is that the founder of the house was cursed by Caine, and his descendents have lived with the madness since. The Malkavians have always existed on the periphery of the Vampire culture, watching, but never truly involving themselves in it. Long ago, before the curse and the madness, their founder was said to be the greatest among the Third Generation. Now it is his machinations that keep the weakest of those involved in the Jyhad "alive."

Nosferatu:

It is the unfortunate plight of the members of this Clan to display the Beast within their heart upon their countenance. Though their founder was known for his rabid taste and monstrous impulses, the Nosferatu today are known for being calm and cool-headed. Though they choose only the most depraved as their Progeny, somehow the members of this Clan seem to be the most sane. The founder is said to have been a man of regal visage, yet he incurred the wrath of Caine for his barbaric activities and was thereby cursed with appearance of a troll. The inner savagery of his soul is reflected upon his face and the faces of all his Progeny. Of course, many Clans have legends in which an all-powerful Caine curses their founder just as God cursed Caine. It is not likely that all of these stories are true, but some might. It would certainly help explain the appearance of the Nosferatu. Presently, the Nosferatu Clan is not close to their founder, and do not serve him — at least to their knowledge.

Toreador:

Throughout history, the Toreador have been involved in the Arts. This is a tradition said to have begun with the first Progeny of the founder, a pair of beautiful and artistically gifted twins. Their Sire was a leader of the Cabal of Third Generation Vampires who slew their own Sire. Though ruthless, he was very doting upon his Progeny, proffering them far more independence than any other Fourth Generation Vampires were given. They used their freedom to nurture the full panorama of the Arts, and their Sire protected them through war and famine. To this day, the Toreador claim that they are watched over by Arikel, their founder. Though the Toreador are not formally organized as are some other Clans, they are furiously loyal to one another and to the Art they claim to serve.

Tremere:

The Tremere are unique and no other Clan has a history as rich as their's. Long ago, there were others of their line who were not warlocks, nor did the Clan have mastery over the Discipline Thaumaturgy. Less than a thousand years ago, a metamorphosis occurred. Deep in the Romanian mountains in the district known as Transylvania, a group of magi from an ancient order of wizards, were Embraced by a foolish Elder of the Clan. Combining their new powers with their ancient lore, the magi were quickly able to assume control of the Clan. They Embraced many others from their arcane order, and drank the Blood of all the Elders of their Clan. It is even hinted that the most powerful among them (Tremere himself) managed to hunt down and slay the founder of the line. Tremere has adopted the most rigid hierarchical system among all the Clans, and this has allowed them to achieve great power within Kindred society. The other Clans are very distrustful of the Tremere, out of both fear and a sense that something is not quite right with them. The major political center of the Tremere Clan is based in Vienna.

Ventrue:

The Ventrue suspect their founder has been slain and replaced by one of the Brujah Clan. Though this is a blow to their pride, it has given them some distance and

protection from the chaos and strife of the Jyhad. Without the intrigues and demands of a god-like founder, the Ventrue have achieved a remarkable independence from the Antediluvians. Though they know not how much truth is contained in this legend, it is one of the basic tenets of their Clan. The stature and respect the Ventrue Clan is accorded is largely due to the independence they are perceived to have from the Antediluvians. It is out of pride for this respect they are given that they do not openly persecute those of the Brujah Clan. More Princes and Justicars come from the Ventrue Clan than from any other and they are clearly the leaders of the Camarilla. The Ventrue have regular Clan meetings in various parts of the world, including a Grand Council in London every seven years.

Other Clans

There are many Clans other than the ones described above. These are Clans that do not claim membership in the Camarilla. There are said to be thirteen Clans in all, but it is possible that there are many more than that, especially when one considers the unknown secrets of the Eastern Kindred, who undoubtedly have their own unique Clans. Some of the best known Clans are the Giovannis and the Followers of Set. Though there is not room to detail them here, more will be said about them in the supplements to this game. Alternately, you may simply create your own unique Clans to use within your Chronicle.

Caitiff

Some Kindred do not have a Clan at all, but are considered free and independent. This is usually because they were abandoned by their Sire. The combination of a thinness of blood and a lack of training has made them Clanless. This is a very recent phenomena, and thus they are disdained by many of the other Kindred. Though many Caitiff are considered to be footpads or Anarchs, not all of them are outcasts. Some are accepted among the Damned, but none have yet reached an age where they have achieved any real power.

Sects

I am a brother to dragons,
and a companion to owls.
My skin is black upon me,
and my bones are burned with heat.

— JOB chapter 30, verses 29-30

As the importance of Lineage has slowly decreased, groups known as Sects have appeared. Some Ancients deride the existence and concept of Sects as "*—modern foolishness. The blood is all that matters.*" Over half of the Vampires in the world belong to one of the Sects, the rest either maintain their independence or are attached exclusively to their bloodline. The largest and most dominant Sect is the, though the much smaller Sabbat closely contends it on every front. Though the Inconnu claim they are not a Sect, as a group they stay well clear of both other Sects.

Camarilla

The Camarilla is the largest single Sect of Vampires, and any Vampire may claim membership, regardless of Lineage or association. In fact, the leaders of the Camarilla assume that all Vampires are part of their Sect. In this regard, they view the Camarilla as the great Society of Vampires.

The Camarilla's main concern is the maintenance and preservation of the Masquerade — the continued concealment of the existence of true Vampires. It was organized in the fourteenth century in response to the Inquisition. Historically, there have been attempts by the leaders of the Camarilla to gain authority over other aspects of Vampiric existence. Each time, that attempt has failed in a wave of bloodshed. The Princes do not brook interference into what they consider to be their historical rights and privileges, nor do the Ancients desire a powerful group which could thwart their aims. Therefore, the Camarilla remains a weak and divided Sect of only moderate influence. The Elders who remain involved in the Jyhad use it as another means to control the Anarchs.

It is said that the Ventrue Clan played a primary role in bringing the Clans together to found the Camarilla. It is their efforts and imagination that were behind its improbable origin. Some say they did so in order to have a means of controlling the other Kindred. All seven Clans were involved in the conception of the Camarilla, and though other Clans were invited, none ever came. Individuals from other Clans may be a part of the Camarilla, but no other Clan is. Though the Camarilla is open to all bloodlines, those that chose to participate represent only a small majority of all known bloodlines. Only seven of the thirteen Clans regularly attend the meetings of the Camarilla.

The Camarilla does not recognize the existence of the Antediluvians. Statements may be made to the Conclave concerning it, but they refuse to reach any decision involving it. As far as the Camarilla is concerned, they simply do not exist.

Conclave

Conclaves are important and potentially dangerous events. Open to any and all, much care is taken to insure the secrecy of the Conclave site before the meeting, and its physical security while the meeting is in progress. An enemy of the Camarilla could take such an event as an opportunity for mass destruction. Indeed, during the entire duration of the Conclave, all participants are locked into the chambers by the retainers

of the Justicars (who are described below). The Conclave may last anywhere from a couple hours to many weeks.

Usually, Conclaves are only called when they are needed and are held in the geographic region most concerned with the problem at hand. Tradition holds that Conclaves can only be called by a Justicar. Those who gather to witness a Conclave are part of what is known as the Assembly. Members of the Assembly have the right to address the Conclave if supported by at least two members of the Conclave. Each Vampire who attends the Conclave gets one vote — a Justicar serves as chairman.

The primary function of the Conclave is to make recommendations on matters brought before it. Any Kindred may bring a matter before the Conclave, and most concern the adjudication of grievances between Kindred. Often complaints against Princes are brought up at Conclaves, as are petitions by Princes to deal especially harshly with the Anarchs in a city. Essentially, any action that would be considered a break of Tradition must be discussed and agreed upon by a Conclave in order to avoid future punishment by the Camarilla.

The Conclave interprets the Traditions and in some instances even establishes new Traditions. It may also call Blood Hunts, even against Princes, who otherwise are safe from them. In times past, Conclaves have been convened for the sole purpose of removing a Prince from power. The Camarilla has always vigorously maintained its right to depose the rulers of the cities. The Justicars themselves do not have this power, though they may call a Conclave to achieve this end.

Decisions made by the Conclave may be challenged by the undergoing of an Ordeal. This can be nearly any sort of exacting trial, mission or quest, which is given by the Conclave to test the suspect. Such Ordeals may last only a minute or it may take many years, and if not completed satisfactorily, the officiating Justicar is free to assign any penalty. If the crime is considered too great to let the Vampire free to complete an Ordeal, they may face a challenge by one of their accusers. The two antagonists combat one another in a ritual challenge. This may be a duel fought without weapons but with each opponent blindfolded, or a contest where each sucks the other's Blood until one of them is extinguished (a series of Strength rolls to see how fast they can drain the other).

The Camarilla has many punishments it can inflict upon those who break the Traditions. Chief among them is the Blood Chalice. The entire assembly of the Conclave pours a portion of their Blood into a chalice, and the offending Kindred must drink of it. Thus they are one third of the way, at least, towards being Blood Bound by all those Kindred. Repeat offenders are very uncommon, especially after the second time they are penalized in this way.

There is usually something of a population explosion after a Conclave, as Princes reward those who voted in their favor by allowing them to produce Progeny.

Conclaves can only be called by a Justicar, who may do so at any time. However, most Justicars have arranged for regular Conclave to be held, at which all Kindred are welcome. Every three years, a Conclave meets in New Orleans overseen by Xaviar, a Justicar of Clan Gangrel.

Inner Circle

Every thirteen years, there is a meeting of the Elders of each Clan. This is the true hub and center of the Camarilla. Compared to this assembly, all other Conclaves are but puppet shows. The Inner Circle meets in Venice as it has done for the past 500 years.

Each bloodline is allowed one representative to sit on the Inner Circle. Only this individual may vote, though all those who attend may speak. The Eldest member of each Clan present places the vote for that Clan. It is a majority of age. This is a primary reason why the Anarchs are so frustrated.

He tries to lose himself in a crowd, but the smell of their blood does not leave him in peace.

The primary function of the Inner Circle is to appoint the Justicars, the judges of the Sect. One Justicar is chosen from each of the seven Clans. They act of their own accord, but are required to take the decisions of the Inner Circle under consideration. By decree of the Inner Circle, Justicars hold the Right of Summary Justice, the ability to deal with members of the Camarilla who transgress the Traditions. The Seven Justicars hold the true power in the Camarilla.

The entitlement of a Justicar is a long, drawn-out political battle, for the major bloodlines would each like to select the representative of their choice, but it is difficult to obtain the majority needed. The losers in the intrigue end up with a Justicar of young years or weak powers who will be ignored for thirteen years. Thus, those finally appointed tend to be compromise candidates or chosen from the lower rungs of a line. Sometimes, even obscure Kindred are chosen by Elders who believe they will be easy to manipulate once appointed.

Justicar

It is at first difficult to grasp the relationship of the Conclave and the Justicar. The Conclave is forbidden by Tradition to pass any judgement directly upon any member of the Camarilla. This Tradition acts to limit the possibility of any abuse of power. The Conclave's only avenue of control lies through these judges, whom they appoint to do it for them.

Justicars have the only true authority, which they hold over all the Camarilla, and all Kindred, *except those who sit on the Inner Circle*. They have the ultimate decision-making and adjudication power over matters involving violation of the Traditions. No member of the Camarilla is considered above them in this arena. If one of the Blood is found to have violated the Traditions, it is a Justicar who decides the punishment. There are no guidelines concerning the punishment, and this is left to the discretion of each Justicar. Their decisions are often harsh. They are supposed to hold a Conclave each time

He is a predator and the herd can smell it.

they wish to pass judgement, but over the years the Justicars have assumed more and more power and no longer feel the need to do so. Justicars can call a Conclave at any time, either to confirm or a make a momentous decision the Justicar does not care to make themselves.

The decision or action of a Justicar can only be challenged by another Justicar. If a major point of contention arises between Justicars, a Conclave is held where the Justicars come together and resolve the dispute. The resolution usually comes in the form of a vote, but sometimes, depending on the dispute, personal challenges can arise.

Many Elders resent the authority of the Justicars. Some are very outspoken in their opposition. Most accept it, however, for fear of opposing the Justicars, who are frequently of considerable age.

Justicars often have Coteries of other Vampires who do their bidding, and these Kindred are known as Archons. These are often the Brood of the Justicar and are always willingly Blood Bonded to them. They enforce the Justicars' will and report breaches of the Traditions. The Archons are the eyes and ears of the Justicars.

The Sabbat

Also known as the Black Hand, the Sabbat is rumored to have evolved from a medieval death cult. Little of its nature has changed since then. They are the next largest Sect after the Camarilla.

The Black Hand rules through fear, hatred, anger and physical violence. In North America, they hold undisputed control over Detroit, Toronto, Montreal, New York, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Portland, and are close to gaining supremacy in Boston and Baltimore. Until recently, Miami was also under their control, but recent events have seen a swing in the power balance there.

They are organized in packs that feed and travel as one group. They have strong loyalty to others in the pack. Indeed, in the Camarilla, it has become a derogatory term to call a Coterie a "pack."

Members of the Sabbat come from many different Lineages, though two bloodlines run strong through the organization: the families Lasombra and Tzimisces. Though it may be possible to join the Sabbat, almost all members are created. The Black Hand requires strict devotion and adherence to the will of the group.

Their initiation procedure is designed to destroy any of the vestigial will in a new Vampire. The Initiates are slain, slowly and painfully, and then given the Blood. This Blood doesn't come from one member of the Sabbat, but from as many as are present at the initiation, combined into a chalice. Once the Initiate has been given the Blood, he is buried alive. He must crawl out in order to live. Those who do not, spend eternity buried under the earth. The process of digging oneself from a grave tears the Initiate's Humanity from him and opens him to the subjugation and brainwashing of the Sabbat.

Once the Initiates breaks free, they are Blood Bonded to the pack that Embraced them. In a strange ritual, which occurs over three different nights, the Initiate is given more Blood.

The Black Hand is concerned solely with power of all forms. They are actively engaged in diabolism and have a fanatical opposition to life and its trappings. They view mortals as lesser beasts to be dominated and used as need requires. Their places of worship are the places of the dead—cemeteries, tombs and charnel houses. They understand themselves to be Undead, and behave accordingly. Any who oppose them are burnt.

They revel in being Vampires, in living out their pure instincts. They find other Kindred contemptible because they try so hard to retain their Humanity. For the Sabbat, this is the greatest blasphemy.

They often send groups of their kind into cities held by the Camarilla, either to scout out the opposition, or to hunt for those who have fled from their covens. Camarilla politics are invariably complicated by the presence of Sabbat Kindred.

The Sabbat is said to be engaged in a strange sort of Diablerie, wherein they ritually butcher the Elders of their kind, so that stronger, more aggressive and younger Kindred may take their place. But like so much else spoken of among Kindred outside the Sabbat, this is unconfirmed. The Princes of the major cities world-wide would give much to gain hard evidence of the workings of the Sabbat. All of them fear the danger of its steady growth.

In the end, nothing of fact can be said of the Sabbat. Indeed, all that the Camarilla believes of them could be false, rumors spread by Ancients who wish the two Sects to war. It is unlikely, but all too possible.

The Inconnu

"Inconnu" is the term used to describe those of the Blood who have distanced themselves from the others of their kind. It is less a Sect than it is a classification. The Inconnu are old, powerful, and as such have little need for blood or the company of humans. They tend to live in the wild near animals and sleep within the earth when the sun is in the sky. It is unknown how they manage to live in peace with the shape-changers who rule the wild areas. Others of them still live within the cities, and may even be interested in the Jyhad, but by the rules of their Sect may not become involved in it. Some have attended Camarilla Conclave meetings, creating great awe in the other Kindred. The Inconnu, like all Kindred, are always invited.

Most of the Inconnu have grown so old that they will sleep for months or years before awakening. They are like the Antediluvians in that they are no longer completely of this world, but have grown apart from it. Most of them are several millennia old. They are the most powerful Vampires most Kindred will ever encounter.

Many of the Inconnu are members of the Fourth and Fifth Generations who were at one point or another involved in the Jyhad. They have won their places in the hierarchy of Kindred by dint of age or the devouring of their own Elders. They have gone into hiding out of fear for their existence and out of distaste for the modern world. They believe that only by removing themselves from the world can they escape the Jyhad. Despite the best efforts of the Sect, some of its members still become involved in the Jyhad. As a whole, the Inconnu punishes all who continue to take part in the Jyhad or meddle in the matters of lesser Kindred. That is their only law.

A sizable minority of the Inconnu have actually achieved Golconda. This may explain their distaste of the Jyhad and rational approach to many problems among the Kindred.

The Inconnu will allow no Kindred to harm or injure any of its members, no matter what they have done. All rights to punishment are reserved solely for themselves, but it is very difficult to contact them to petition for such. In the end, the Inconnu must be understood as a most enigmatic and mysterious Sect. Their organization and priorities are unknown, if indeed it can even be said that they have such.

The sight of his own reflection entrances him for hours.

Generations

People try to put us down
Just because we get around.
Things they do look aweful cold
I hope I die before I get old.
Talkin' 'bout my Generation.

— The Who, *My Generation*

There are many different Generations of Vampires, and the further a Vampire is removed from the earlier Generations, the weaker they are as well. Often, Vampires are identified by what Generation they are part of, and it becomes part of their name, as does their Lineage. Player characters will always be of the Thirteenth Generation (unless they have chosen the Generation Background Trait).

It is important to note that Generation does not necessarily indicate age. A Vampire of the Tenth Generation could be twice as old as a Vampire of the Sixth Generation. However, Generations are very important for they reveal how distant a Kindred is from Caine, the origin of all their power. The further you are removed from Caine, the thinner your blood and the less potential power you have.

One of the basic powers that those of earlier Generations share is the capability to Dominate those of later Generations. See the Dominate Discipline in the Traits chapter (page 96).

Remember, if characters engage in the practice of Diablerie, the slaying and drinking of the Blood of Kindred of earlier Generations, they may raise their effective Generation. That is to say, if an Eighth Generation Vampire slays and drinks the remaining Blood of a Seventh Generation Vampire, her effective Generation will now be Seventh, not Eighth. See the Development chapter for more details (page 133).

The chart below describes the special powers of Vampires of different Generations. These differences are quite major, and give the Kindred of earlier Generations considerably more raw power than the characters.

Caine

Tradition holds that Caine, the Biblical slayer of his brother Abel, is the Sire Of All Kindred. There is much controversy over this within the Kindred community, as there are none still existing who can claim with utter certainty to have met Caine. Certainly, those of the Second Generation would know, but they're not talking. Some of the Third Generation who yet exist claim to have met a being who

may have been Caine, or simply a powerful Kindred of the Second Generation.

It is an unresolved question — a mystery of Kindred heritage.

Second Generation

The existing translation of the Book of Nod places the number of the Second Generation at three. Caine in his sorrow created them to live with him in his great city of Enoch. Nothing is known about these three.

One can assume, based on the Book of Nod, that they were slain either during the Calamity, or in the First War following the Flood. As one might expect, all those of age are loathe to speak of their Sires and the great strife that overcame them all. Undoubtedly, some know more than they are revealing.

Were any of the Second Generation still in existence today, they would be powerful beings, almost beyond imagining. Akin to demigods, perhaps.

Third Generation

It is believed that seven members of the Third Generation exist, though the names of only two, Lucian and Mekhet, are widely known. In Vampire argot, they are referred to as the Antediluvians. All remain hidden, lost in the workings of the Jyhad, the war that has lasted nearly as long as recorded history. They continue their fight, but now instead of openly warring on the battlefield, they use subterfuge, guile and outright deceit. Their primary activity seems to be in tracing the activity of each other and thwarting whatever moves their opponents make.

These moves seem to range from something as petty as the acquisition of a piece of artwork or property, to grand schemes involving nations. Those of the Third Generation see themselves as manipulators and dominators, split between those who would live within the mortal world, and those who would live without. It is unclear if this reflects the origins of the Jyhad, or just what it has degenerated into. There are other suspicions, based on the origins of the word *Jyhad*. Some of the Third Generation may indeed have reached Golconda and are attempting to assisting others of their kind in achieving this state. They must war with the other Ancients who do not wish this to come to pass.

Those of the Third Generation are powerful beings, with abilities and powers only guessed at by their lessers. Some say they are the last Generation to have true mastery over the powers of life and death, and can only die the Final Death if they choose or are slain by one of equal power. Is this, perhaps, the Jyhad? A maneuvering to see who shall be the last of their kind?

Generation Trait Max Rating	Blood Pool Size	Blood Points/Turn
Third 10	?	?
Fourth 9	50	10
Fifth 8	40	8
Sixth 7	30	6
Seventh 6	20	5
Eighth 5	15	3
Ninth 5	14	2
Tenth 5	13	1
Eleventh 5	12	1
Twelvth 5	11	1
Thirteenth + 5	10	1

Trait Max Rating: This describes how high a Trait rating a Vampire can have. This is especially important when it comes to Disciplines (see the Storyteller's Handbook for information on Discipline powers of ratings 6-10, or make them up yourself). Note that it is impossible for player characters to have more than a five rating in any Trait, at least before the beginning of the Chronicle.

Blood Pool Size: Ancient Vampires are capable of storing more blood (or its energy) in their system than younger ones.

Blood Points/Turn: This describes how many Blood Points a Vampire can use in a single turn — for either extra dice or levels of healing.

Fourth and Fifth Generations

These Vampires are known as the Methuselahs, for they are nearly as powerful and secretive as the Antediluvians. Those of the Fourth and Fifth Generations are most often the pawns of choice in the Jyhad, as they may have political power among the other Kindred. As a result, their numbers have dwindled significantly with the actions of the Antediluvians. Few of this Generation remain active, and many have become

Inconnu out of fear of the Jyhad, as well as Diablerie. The Inner Circle of the Camarilla are said to be composed of members from the Fourth Generation. Some have even put forth that the true purpose of the Camarilla is to blunt the efforts of the Third Generation among the younger Generations.

Though the Blood of Caine is beginning to dilute somewhat, those of the Fourth Generation are still extremely powerful. It can be assumed that they have reached their maximum potential in two or three Disciplines.

Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Generations

Those of these Generations are powerful enough to think they can resist the workings of their Elders, and so they still remain deeply involved in Vampiric society. They control the Camarilla (at least they think so), comprise the majority of the Princes, and are the Primogen of many cities. Those that are public tend to be important figures, leaders of Clans or bloodlines, or Princes of great cities. Most of the Princes of European cities tend to be of the Sixth Generation. Princes of American cities, tend to be of the Eighth Generation.

Members of these Generations have most commonly reached their maximum potential in one or two Disciplines.

Interestingly, the Eight Generation seems to be the last Generation viewed as "Elders." Perhaps it is because the majority of them where created before the modern age, and that tells in their manner and bearing.

Ninth and Tenth Generations

Though they are sometimes called Elders, these Kindred often associate themselves with those of the younger Generations. Members of these Generations are frequently called Ancilla, though of course this is more based on age than Generation. They were largely created in the modern era, and thus are somewhat alien in temperament to the older Kindred. In more ways than one, they bridge the gap between the Anarchs and the Elders.

Eleventh, Twelvth, and Thirteenth Generations

The most recent generations of Kindred are most often called Neonates. Most player characters belong to these Generations. They are still powerful creatures, but the special gifts of Caine's blood (the unique powers and abilities) are rarely found here. Born within recent memory, the Kindred of these Generations are products of societies that have received the benefits of, and been victims of, rapid change.

The old man's song delights the Neonate, but blood music is a more potent melody.

Antagonists:

Sundown
You'd better take care
When I find you've been creeping
'Round my back stair

— Gordon Lightfoot, *Sundown*

Sometimes it seems the Kindred's greatest enemy is their own kind. This attitude is certainly prevalent now, and it may have even been true one hundred years ago. Today, the Kindred have much to be concerned about. With the advent of modern technology, old superstitions and fears have fallen away. Humanity no longer fears the dark; we do not realize that we need to.

Below we have listed a number of different categories of antagonists, which you can throw at your players. With each category is a list of different opponents you may wish to pit against the characters. Though you should always create unique opponents, this list should help you in constructing such.

If you want examples of some of these antagonists, see the *Forged in Steel* example in the Chronicle chapter (page 210).

Governments

How much do the world governments suspect? How much do they know? It is hard to say. Many governments have agencies or departments devoted to the investigation of paranatural occurrences, but many, especially on the military end, seem to be devoted to extra-sensory phenomena, like ESP, clairvoyance and telekinesis. In general, it seems clear that the Masquerade has been successful and that they know very little.

Britain has such an organization, but it is very difficult to trace. There is some suspicion that it is actually of a quasimystical nature, possibly with ties to similar organizations dating back hundreds of years. British Kindred have reported instances of unnerving accuracy in the investigations of Scotland Yard following unfortunate Kindred-related occurrences. Some even suspect that the authorities there have knowingly brought about the deaths of at least two deranged Vampires within the last seventy-five years. Some say that this group is actually controlled by a Vampire and is used by her to combat her enemies.

In the United States, interest in Vampire activity can be traced to two agencies: the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the National Security Agency.

The FBI is believed to contain several individuals who may suspect the truth. It is believed that some of the investigations into para-natural activities in the 50's and 60's may have turned up some Kindred related information. Originally formed to counter the impact of suspected "Communist Thought Control" research, this department, known generally as Special Affairs (though their members rarely identify themselves as such) is involved in continuing investigations. However it has dwindled significantly in power and membership over the years. Proof of suspected activities is demanded by the FBI before action can be taken, and proof is what has thus far eluded them. Circumstantial evidence no doubt abounds, but that last, necessary piece of tangible evidence has escaped them. So far.

It is believed that the NSA keeps an active file on Vampire-related events, but treats it as a subclassification of mass-murders. They have not yet made the connections that would reveal the whole picture. The NSA is a giant fact-sifting agency. Concerned with national security, from an internal perspective, police and news reports that contain "interesting or anomalous" facts are routinely flagged. Investigation only occurs after the computer, or a reviewer, notices "undue occurrences" that may be "related." Should those connections be made, the resources that could be brought to bear are truly frightening. In recent years, much of the attention of the Camarilla has been focused on this agency, and word has been spread that no one should engage in activities that would cause them to be flagged by these computers. As of yet, no Vampire has been able to infiltrate retainers into the agency.

Recently, the Center for Disease Control, based in Atlanta, has become deeply concerned over the increasing incidences of AIDS being transmitted without apparent close contact of any sort. They have begun to worry that the virus no longer requires sexual contact to be spread. Before news begins to spread, they have begun an enormous investigation.

Police Officer: Most local cops can be found in police cruisers, often with a partner. Help is only a radio call away, usually 1-5 other cars will arrive within minutes of an emergency call. In extreme emergencies, up to 50 other police officers can be called in to help within 10 minutes (at least in a city).

Character Creation. Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 15/9/3, Background: 7, Willpower: 5

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Physical Traits where you can assume a rating of 3.

Suggested Abilities. Alertness: 2, Leadership: 1, Brawl: 2, Streetwise: 1, Dodge: 2, Security: 3, Repair: 1, Firearms: 3, Drive: 2, Melee: 1, Stealth: 1, Investigation: 2, Bureaucracy: 1, Computers: 1, Law: 2, Police Procedure: 3.

Equipment. Lt Revolver, Lt Auto Pistol, Pump Shotgun, Billy Club, Handcuffs, Radio, Badge, Flashlight.

Police Detective: Police detectives are called to the scenes of murders and other major crimes. They are likely to be the type of police officer who will become most involved in the investigation of matters related to Kindred.

Character Creation. Attributes: 8/5/3, Abilities: 17/9/3, Background: 7, Willpower: 7

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Perception and Wits, where you can assume a rating of 3.

Suggested Abilities. Alertness: 3, Leadership: 2, Brawl: 2, Streetwise: 4, Intimidation: 1, Subterfuge: 3, Dodge: 1, Security: 3, Repair: 1, Firearms: 3, Drive: 2, Melee: 1, Stealth: 1, Investigation: 4, Bureaucracy: 1, Computers: 1, Law: 2, Police Procedure: 4.

Equipment. Lt Revolver, Lt Auto Pistol, Handcuffs, Radio, Badge, Flashlight.

Government Agent: These characters can be either from the FBI, the NSA, the CIA, or from whatever local government agency is appropriate. They most often will have a great deal of backup and possess much authority.

Character Creation. Attributes: 9/5/4, Abilities: 18/10/6, Background: 7, Willpower: 8

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Perception and Intelligence, where you can assume a rating of at least 3.

Suggested Abilities. Alertness: 3, Leadership: 3, Brawl: 3, Acting: 1, Intimidation: 2, Dodge: 2, Subterfuge: 1, Athletics: 1, Security: 3, Firearms: 3, Drive: 3, Stealth: 3, Investigation: 4, Bureaucracy: 2, Politics: 1, Computers: 1, Law: 3, Police Procedure: 5.

Equipment. Lt Revolver, Hv Auto Pistol, Submachine Gun, Radio, Video Camera, Forensics Lab, Portable Phone Tap, Portable Lie Detector, Bugs, Class II Armor, Mirror Shades.

SWAT Officer: These officers are specially trained with high power weapons and military tactics. If things ever get out of hand with the Vampires, a gun battle for instance, then they will certainly be called in.

Character Creation. Attributes: 8/5/3, Abilities: 15/9/3, Background: 7, Willpower: 6

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Physical Traits, where you can assume a rating of 3.

Suggested Abilities. Alertness: 3, Leadership: 2, Brawl: 3, Streetwise: 1, Dodge: 3, Security: 3, Repair: 2, Firearms: 4, Drive: 3, Melee: 2, Stealth: 2, Intimidation: 2, Law: 1, Police Procedure: 3.

He tries to block the deed from his mind, but the man's death echoes in his memory.

Equipment. Lt Auto Pistol, Submachine Gun, Radio, Bullhorn, Class III Body Armor, Battering Ram, Rappelling Equipment, Armored Vehicle.

The inquisition

It is generally acknowledged that the Roman Catholic Church learned of the Kindred during the years of the Inquisition. Instituted in 1229, the Inquisition concerned itself with the active suppression of the various heresies spreading through Europe. Partially in response to the rise of the Catharist heresy in the south of France and northern Italy, Pope Innocent IV approved the use of torture in 1252.

There are tales that the Catharist beliefs were actively supported by many Kindred of the time. It is said that some of these Kindred fell into the hands of the Inquisition when their brethren were forced to confess their heresy. If this is so, it could explain much concerning the rapid escalation in the tyrannical practices of certain leaders of the Inquisition. Perhaps they had seen proof, with their own eyes, of evil incarnate in the world.

Whatever the truth of those events during the thirteenth century, all indications are that the Church remains aware, and concerned about, the Kindred. There have been reports of two orders within the Church who are the focus of those concerns. Indeed, the Inquisition continues still, albeit in a different form.

Today the Inquisition is an organization of scholars and researchers of the occult, as well as a clearing house for many of the greatest Vampire hunters. Originally founded by the Pope, it was initially only an investigative committee for heresy, but it became a ruthless program of elimination and torture of undesirables. Though it was thought to have ended sometime in the fourteenth century, many of its members continued their mission from within the Church. Though the Inquisition is no longer supported or sanctioned by the Church, most of its members are from the Catholic Church. It is a loose confederation of scholars and high-ranking priests who keep in touch mainly through letters and the rare conference. Though they have taken a new name, "The Society of Leopold," and say they are only interested in research, they are preeminent among the Vampire hunters. They know all the best ways to immobilize and kill Vampires, and keep most of the oldest records.

However, they still don't know very much about the Kindred of today. Mainly they study old records and engage in endless speculations, and at times they embark on hunts and hold trials. They rarely kill their suspects, at least not right away, but hold trials first. Their eventual aim is to rid the world of all that is supernatural.

The Camarilla has decreed that they are to be left alone and avoided as much as possible—better to give them nothing to study rather than give the whole world something to focus its attention on. Better a group of crackpots than a group of martyrs. Among many Vampires, the Inquisition

has retained much of its old reputation and is much hated. Universally, Vampires do not trust the Inquisition or believe that they have truly "reformed," especially those Vampires who lived through the first period of persecution. These Kindred take every chance they can to torment, lure and embarrass members of the Inquisition, despite the decrees made by the Inner Circle of the Camarilla.

In general, the members of the Society of Leopold have gained several protections against Vampires. They are learning to use various holy objects to weave protections against Domination, Presence and even Auspex. This has made them formidable enemies of the Kindred. Additionally, they can call upon the aid of many different groups when they seek "witches."

Among the most influential members of the Society are the Dominicans, who can trace their involvement back to the first Inquisition, which they partially oversaw. Many Kindred fear continued Dominican involvement, forgetting the circumstances and climate that contributed to the Inquisition. They also forget the fact that St. Thomas Aquinas, the renowned philosopher/theologian, was a Dominican during that period. The exact interest and concerns of the Dominicans remain unclear today.

There are also reports of a radical splinter group of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, who are in the midst of a controversy with the Holy Office. Rumors persist that this may have some connection to the destruction of some Kindred in Algeria about five years ago. A former Jesuit brother by the name of Sullivan Dane is believed to have been responsible. Dane is an active witch-hunter, one of the few documented. It is believed that Dane may have been able to use the Algerian incident as proof to some of his former Jesuit brothers that the Kindred threat was real, and not imagined by him. Dane and some of these brethren are reputedly at odds with their superiors and the Holy Office over the matter.

Crosses

Those of true faith are able to ward off Vampires using the cross. It is said that other holy symbols are equally able to ward off Vampires, as it is more a function of the faith of the wielder than the symbol itself. It is possible that a person without a symbol may be capable of warding off a Vampire merely through the use of religious words — but normally a symbol is required.

Give an especially religious character a Faith rating from 1-10, which describes their essential holiness, faith and closeness with God.

Each turn the Vampire attempts to approach the wielder of the cross, a Willpower roll must be made. The Faith rating is the difficulty for the roll. The number of successes indicates how many steps forward the Vampire may take. Failure means no approach is possible, while a botch indicates either a Health Level is lost (due to pain) or the Vampire flees in Frenzied terror.

As he is lifted high, he sees the blood of the old singer draining away with the sewage.

Faith may also be used, on rare occasion, to see if a miracle might take place. How and why such will occur is completely up to the Storyteller.

Witch-hunter: These are the agents of the Inquisition, most often members of one of the various holy orders. All that they do is without the formal knowledge of the Church. A number of Priests have become involved in the Inquisition through their efforts to tend their flocks. They form the network that supports the activities of the Inquisition's agents.

Character Creation. Attributes: 8/6/3, Abilities: 21/12/7, Background: 6, Willpower: 9

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Intelligence, which should often be a 4.

Suggested Abilities. Alertness: 2, Leadership: 3, Intimidation: 3, Dodge: 1, Subterfuge: 2, Empathy: 4, Repair (carpentry): 2, Animal Ken: 2, Survival: 1, Etiquette: 3, Medicine: 3, Investigation: 2, Bureaucracy: 2, Politics: 2, Linguistics: 3, Theology: 5, Philosophy: 4, Art: 2, History: 2, Teaching: 3, Occult: 3.

Equipment available. Bible, Silver Cross, Medal of St. Ignatius, Relics, Robe.

Minister: Some ministers of other faiths — Christian, Jewish and Muslim — may search or hunt for Vampires.

Character Creation. Attributes: 8/5/3, Abilities: 18/9/3, Background: 7, Willpower: 8

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Charisma and Manipulation, which should be 3's or even 4's.

Suggested Abilities. Leadership: 4, Acting: 2, Intimidation: 1, Subterfuge: 2, Empathy: 2, Drive: 1, Music: 2, Survival: 1, Etiquette: 2, Bureaucracy: 2, Finance: 2, Linguistics: 3, Theology: 4, Philosophy: 3, Art: 2, Psychology: 2.

Equipment. Bible, Crucifix, Automobile.

The Arcanum

The formation of the Arcanum can be traced to the mystical "War Of The Roses" that centered around Paris in the late 1800's (not related to the English Baronial wars). A war of words, and if their words are to be believed, mystic forces, arose between two orders of Rosicrucians. The public fighting between the orders became such a public scandal (and entertainment, hence the Parisian newspapers' "War Of The Roses" brand) that many of both group's best practitioners and scholars left their respective orders. After constructing a great Charter, these dissidents came together to form the Arcanum. This order persists to this day.

Though the Arcanum has only formally been in existence less than three hundred years, its history drifts back even further. The core of the Arcanum consists of a group that has branded itself the "While Monks." It is believed that these so-called White Monks were somehow involved in the shadows of the Inquisition, and learned of the Kindred there. However, they are not currently connected with the Inquisition, and never actually engage in the witch hunts. The Arcanum studies, but does not destroy.

The Arcanum has three known Foundation houses, one in Boston, one in Paris and the other in Vienna. Its members, recruited from the cream of intellectual society, are today concerned more with theory than practice. They seem solely devoted to the gathering and studying of occult-related information, but are focused primarily on the past rather than the modern world. There are some members who have shown a degree of interest in the here and now, but it is believed that these members, and the Arcanum itself, believe the Kindred long dead, if they even ever existed beyond folklore. They seem to be more interested in phenomena of a less tangible nature: magic, miracles, hauntings and such.

The existence of the Arcanum does cause the Kindred some concern, since evidence of Kindred activity can and often does appear as signs of more nebulous supernatural activity. A miscalculation could lead the Arcanum right to their doorstep.

A general edict has been proclaimed by the Inner Circle of the Camarilla, and is backed by a Justicar from Clan Brujah named Ryland, that neither the Arcanum or the agents of the Church are to be interfered with by the Kindred. The activity of the orders should be monitored, if encountered, and reported, but no action is to be taken against them. The concern is that any confrontation could prove disastrous by providing the proof that the groups have been waiting for.

Scholar: These intellectuals are involved in the gathering and classification of para-normal matters of all sorts, including the Kindred. They are not interested in violent confrontation with any of the supernatural and will avoid such at all costs.

Character Creation. Attributes: 9/6/3, Abilities: 15/9/3, Background: 7, Willpower: 10.

Suggested Attributes. Assume a rating of two, except for Charisma and Manipulation, which should be 3's or even 4's.

Suggested Abilities. Leadership: 4, Acting: 2, Intimidation: 1, Subterfuge: 2, Empathy: 2, Drive: 1, Music: 2, Survival: 1, Etiquette: 2, Bureaucracy: 2, Finance: 2, Linguistics: 4, Occult: 4, Philosophy: 3, Art: 2, Psychology: 2.

Equipment. Automobile, various "gadgets," investigative paraphernalia.

Ghouls

Many Kindred create Ghouls. This is accomplished by giving a mortal or an animal some Kindred Blood, without first draining them of all their own blood. These Ghouls make excellent retainers, for after they are given Blood three times, they are Blood Bound to that Vampire. No statistics can be given for a Ghoul, since they can be so different from one another — simply take a mortal and then adapt their Traits so that they become more "ghoulish." Ghouls have a number of special powers, due to the Blood they have been given. They are as follows:

• As long as the Ghoul is given Vampire Blood regularly, they are able to live forever.

• Ghouls are able to use the Blood that is given to them in precisely the same way that the Vampire giving it to them could.

• Every Ghoul has the Discipline of Potence. When a mortal first becomes a Ghoul, it is assumed that they have a Potence rating of only one, but that it can be raised through the expenditure of experience. Ghouls can also gain the Disciplines of Fortitude and Celerity. Ghouls who are more than a few hundred years old frequently have high ratings in all three—but few Ghouls live so long.

• In rare instances, Ghouls are known to be able to use some of the other Disciplines that their "Sire" is able to use. The process whereby this can occur is unknown, but usually it only occurs in Ghouls who drink the Blood of an especially ancient Kindred.

There are also some down sides to being a Ghoul.

• Ghouls are susceptible to Frenzy, though it does not happen to them nearly as often as it does the Kindred (difficulties are 3 lower on every Frenzy roll).

• Once the point of their natural life span has passed, the Ghoul must always have Vampire Blood in them, otherwise they will die very quickly — within a few days, or in a few rare instances, a few hours.

Vampires

Vampires tend to be the greatest threats to themselves.

Neonate: These are Vampires who have not yet reached 100 years in age and are usually of the Ninth through Thirteenth (or greater?) Generations — the "teenagers" of Vampires.

Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 13/9/3, Background: 7, Virtues: 10, Willpower: 7, Disciplines: 4

Ancilla: These are the Vampires who have survived more than 100 years, though the term is used very loosely. They are often of the Seventh, Eighth, or Ninth Generations.

Attributes: 9/6/4, Abilities: 18/9/3, Background: 7, Virtues: 13, Willpower: 8, Disciplines: 6

Elder: These are Kindred of the Fifth, Sixth or Seventh Generations, who have survived between 300 and 1000 years and therefore have considerable inherent power.

Attributes: 10/7/5, Abilities: 21/9/3, Background: 12, Virtues: 6, Willpower: 9, Disciplines: 10

Methuselah: These Vampires are of the Fourth or Fifth Generations, and are often members of the Inconnu. They no longer concern themselves with the affairs of mortals. They are usually over 1000 years old.

Attributes: 12/8/6, Abilities: 24/12/7, Background: 12, Virtues: 6, Willpower: 9, Disciplines: 15

Antediluvian: These ancients are of such immense power that to assign them Traits of any sort would be foolish — they are far too powerful for this game system to define. Simply assume that any conflict between them and any other Kindred (including the characters) would automatically result in their victory. To the other Vampires, they are gods, and it is nearly impossible to ever defeat them—at least directly.

Return to the nest, the Elder warns, or find new turf far from here.

Only through the use of creative tactics, diplomacy, and coordination between many allies is it possible to defeat an Antediluvian's plans.

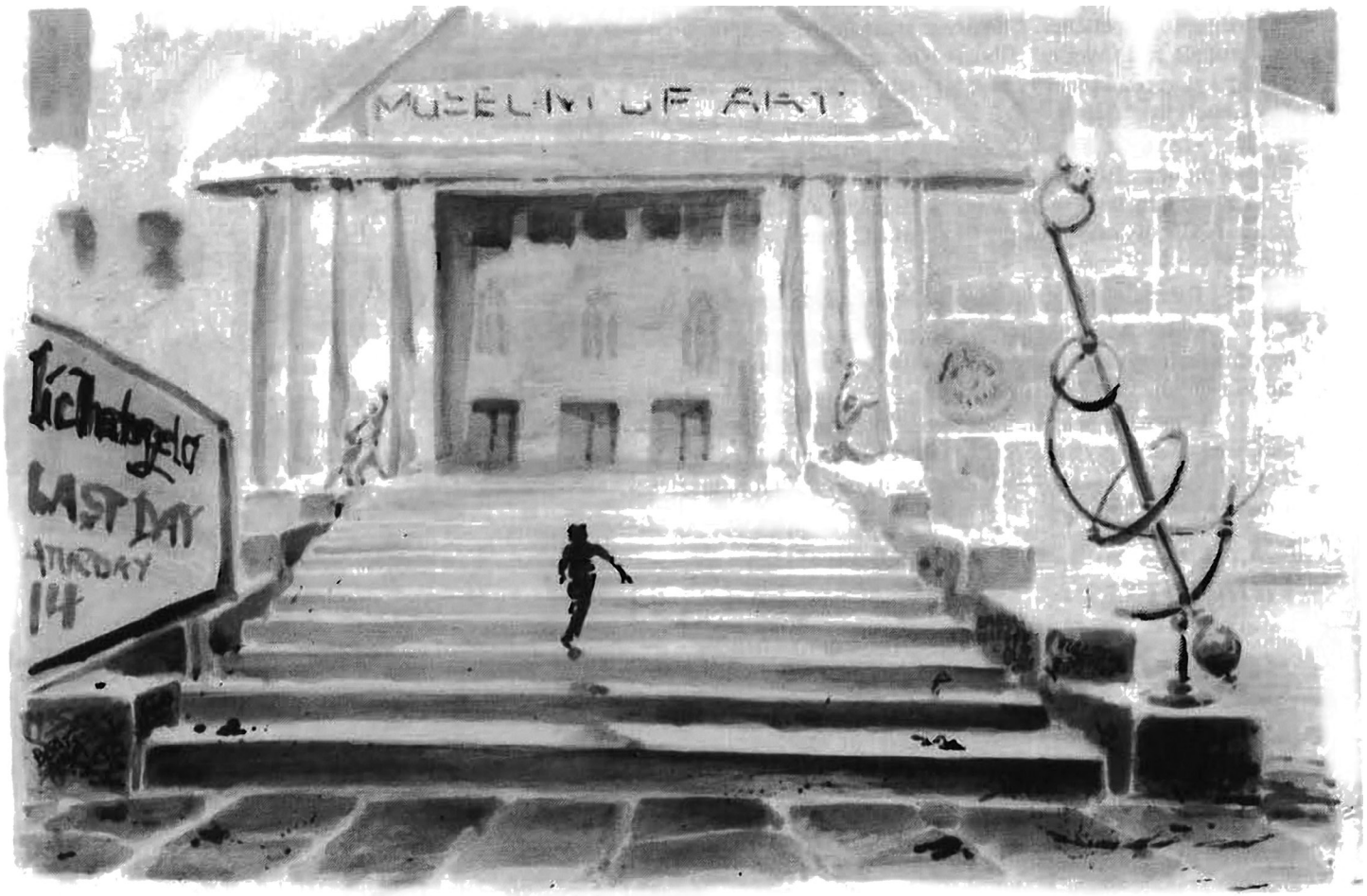
The Lupines

Werewolves are the mortal enemies of Vampires. They tend to live in tight knit Clans connected by family ties, and are quite rustic in outlook. All those in the Clan are related, and most inherit their power through the female line. They are very secretive and insular, despising outsiders. Any Vampire who intrudes on their land is hunted down and executed. Lupines are ferocious fighters and it is almost impossible to sway them from their aims. It is most dangerous to gain their enmity. Only the Gangrel have any contact with the Lupines. On most nights of the full moon, whole Clans of Lupines go on a mad rampage, and all those caught in their path, mortal or otherwise, are slain.

Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 15/9/3, Background: 5, Willpower: 8, Disciplines: 6 (equivalents)

They have several powers:

- Werewolves are able attack several times per turn (Celerity from 2-8 without blood restriction).
- Invulnerability to normal weapons (only silver weapons, or the teeth and claws of Kindred can harm them.)
- Special Attacks (claw and tooth)
- While in wolfman form. Lupines are able to make shocking use of Frenzy. They completely let the Beast loose when in wolfman form and in return can expect to retain their Humanity when in man form. In a story with Lupines, grant them all the benefits of Frenzy in combat, but allow them to release themselves anytime after they have tasted blood.
- They can shape change into a variety of forms, all of them some variation of the wolf. Thus they can change into a wolf, a man, or something halfway in between (a wolfman). When a Werewolf is found during the day, treat them as mundane mortals — it is only if they are met at night, in wolf form, that they have special abilities.



The last night of "Midnight Michelangelo." The victim needs inspiration and must return.

In wolf form, you should double all their Physical Attributes (yes, very nasty). However, they are no longer able to use Social Attributes in connection with any creature other than Werewolves and other wild beasts. They may also be able to use many different Disciplines (equivalents of the Vampire Disciplines).

The Magi

These practitioners of arcane lore are not to be trifled with. These are magicians of great power, and all of them follow the Tradition of the ancient Order of Hermes. Though not enemies of the Kindred, they will eliminate any who get in their way. However, it is said that they despise members of the Tremere Clan, and brand them as traitors. They maintain a Masquerade as vigorously as do the Kindred. This alone serves to minimize conflicts.

See the Thaumaturgy Discipline for ideas on how the wizards can use magic, but in general understand that they are far more capable than the Tremere in these magical arts.

Treat them as a normal human being except for their magical powers.

Character Creation. Attributes: 7/5/3, Abilities: 21/12/ 8, Background: 9, Willpower: 9, Disciplines: 12 (equivalent)

Because I could not stop for Death —
He kindly stopped for me —
The Carriage held but just Our selves —
And Immortality.

— Emily Dickenson,
Because I could not stop for Death

Lexicon

There exists among the Kindred a distinct *patois*, drawing on many tongues and giving new shades of meaning to certain mortal words. You can often tell what Generation a Vampire is from by listening to the parlance that they employ. There is a sharp distinction between the words used by the Anarchs and those employed by Elders. Using the wrong vernacular in the wrong circumstances could be most revealing of your sympathies.

Common Parlance

These are the terms that are most commonly used among the Kindred.

Anarch	A rebel among the Kindred, one with no respect for the Elders. Most Fledglings are automatically assumed to be Anarchs by the Elders, as they are products of the 20th century.
Barrens, The	The areas of a city that are devoid of life. Graveyards, abandoned buildings and parks.
Becoming, The	The moment one becomes a Vampire. The metamorphosis from mortal to Kindred. Also called *The Change*.
Book of Nod, The	The "sacred" book of the Kindred, tracing their origins and early history. It has never been published in its entirety, although fragmentary copies are known to exist in various languages.

Was it not David who bested a greater foe?

Beast, The	The drives and urges which prompt a Vampire to become entirely a monster, forsaking all Humanity. Vide *Man* infra.
Blood	The Vampire's heritage. That which makes a Vampire a Vampire, or simply the Blood of the Vampire.
Blood Kindred	The relationship between Vampires of the same *Lineage* and *Clan*. The idea is much the same among mortals, only the means of transmission are somewhat different.
Blood Oath	The most potent bond which can exist between Vampires; the receiving of blood in an acknowledgement of mastery. This grants a mystical power over the one who is bound. Vide *Blood Bond* infra.
Brood	A group of Vampires gathered around a leader who is usually their Sire. A Brood may in time become a *Clan* (qv).
Caitiff	A Vampire with no Clan. Frequently used in a derogatory fashion. To be Clanless is not a virtue among the Kindred.
Camarilla, The	A global Conclave of Vampires, in which all Kindred may hold membership. Its rule is far from absolute, and it serves as a debating-chamber more than a government.
Childe	A derogatory term for a young, inexperienced, or foolish Vampire. The plural form is *Childer*.
Clan	A group of Vampires who share certain mystic and physical characteristics. Vide *Lineage*, *Blood Line*.
Diablerie	The cannibalistic behavior common among Kindred. Drinking the Blood of other Kindred. The Elders do so out of need, but the Anarchs do so out of desire for power.
Domain	The fiefdom claimed by a Vampire, most often a Prince. Invariably it's a city.
Elder	A Vampire of 300 years of age or older. These individuals consider themselves the most powerful of Kindred, and usually engage in their own Jyhad.
Elysium	The name given for the places where the Elders meet and gather, commonly the opera, theater or other public places of culture.
Embrace, The	The act of transforming a mortal into a Vampire by draining the mortal's blood and replacing it with a small amount of the Vampire's own Blood.
Fledgling	A young, newly created Vampire. Vide *Neonate*, *Whelp*.
Generation	The number of steps between a Vampire and the mythical Caine. Caine's Get were the Second Generation, their Brood the Third, and so on.
Gehenna	The coming end of the Third Cycle or the coming Armageddon when the Elders shall awaken and devour all Vampires.
Ghoul	A most loyal servant, created by allowing a mortal to drink Kindred Blood without the draining that would give rise to a *Progeny*.
Haven	The home of a Vampire or the place where they sleep during the day.
Hunger, The	As with mortals and other animals, the drive to feed. For Vampires, though, it is much more besides, and takes the place of every other drive, urge and pleasure.
Inconnu	A Sect of Vampires, mostly Methuselahs, who have removed themselves from both mortal and Kindred affairs. They state that they have nothing to do with the Jyhad.
Jyhad, The	The secret war being waged between the few surviving Vampires of the Third Generation, using younger Vampires as playing-pieces. Also used to describe any sort of conflict or warfare between Vampires.
Kindred	A Vampire. Many Elders consider even this term to be vulgar, and prefer to use a more poetic word such as *Cainite*.

Kiss	To take the blood of a mortal, or the act of taking blood in general. The Embrace of ecstasy, the sweet draining of the elixir of life.
Lupine	Werewolf.
Lush	A Vampire who habitually feeds upon prey who are under the influence of drink or drugs in order to experience their sensations. Vide *Head*.
Life, The	An euphemistic term for mortal blood taken as sustenance. Many Kindred regard the term as affected and over-delicate.
Man, The	That part of Humanity which remains in a Vampire, and which strives against the base urgings of the *Beast* (qv).
Masquerade, The	The effort begun after the end of the great wars to hide Kindred society from the mortal world. A policy reaffirmed after the time of the Inquisition.
Prince	A Vampire who has established a claim to rulership over a city, and is able to support that claim *nil disputandum*. A Prince often has a *Brood* (qv) to aid him. The feminine form is still Prince.
Riddle, The	The essential dilemma of a Vampire's existence — to prevent the occurrence of greater atrocities, one must commit evil deeds of a lesser nature. The proverb is: *monsters we are lest monsters we become*.
Rogue	A Vampire who feeds upon other Vampires, either out of need or perversion. Vide *Diablerie*, *Devil Kindred*.
Sabbat, The	A group of Vampires controlling much of eastern North America. They are violent and bestial, revelling in needless cruelty.
Sect	General name for one of the three primary groups among the Kindred — the Camarilla, Sabbat or Inconnu.
Sire	The parent-creator of a Vampire, used both as the female and male form.
Vessel	A potential or past source of blood, typically a human.

Old Form

These are the words used by the Elders and other Vampires of antiquity. Though these terms are used very little among those newly created, they are still the fashionable vernacular among the more sophisticated of the Kindred. You can almost always identify Elders simply by the words they use.

Amaranth	The act of drinking the Blood of other Kindred.

So does the guilty return to the scene of the crime.

Ancilla	Adolescent Vampire, one who is no longer a Neonate, but is not an Elder either.
Antediluvian	The oldest of the Kindred, a member of the Third Generation. A warlord of the Jyhad.
Archon	A powerful Vampire who wanders from city to city, usually serving a Justicar. They are frequently used to track down Kindred who have fled a city.
Autarkis	A Vampire who refuses to be a part of Vampire society, and does not recognize the Domain of a Prince.
Cainite	A Vampire. Vide *Kindred*.
Canaille	The mortal masses, especially that element of it which is the most unsavory and lacking in culture (which the Kindred largely feed upon).

His flight is reflexive. He will in time accept his new life, but not with that woman.

Cauchemar	A Vampire who feeds only on sleeping victims and prevents their awakening.
Cunctator	A Vampire who avoids killing by drinking shallowly and taking too little blood to kill the prey; *faut plus chasser, peut mieux dormir*. Compare *Casanova*.
Coterie	A group of Kindred who protect and support one another against all outsiders. Vide *Brood*.
Consanguineus	One of the same Lineage, usually younger.
Diablerie	A term for when a Vampire feeds upon other Vampires, either out of need or perversion. Vide *Rogue*.
Footpad	One who feeds off the derelicts and the homeless, and who frequently does not have a Haven of their own. Vide *Alleycat*.
Gentry	A Kindred who hunts the nightclubs, districts of ill repute, and other places of entertainment where mortals seek to pair off. Vide *Rake*.
Golconda	The state of being to which most Vampires aspire, in which a balance is found between opposing urges and scruples. The slide into bestiality is halted and the individual reaches a kind of stasis. Like the mortals' Nirvana, it is oft spoken of and seldom achieved.
Humanitas	The degree to which a Kindred still retains some Humanity.
Kine	A contemptuous term for mortals, often used in counterpoint to *Kindred*. The expression *Kindred and Kine* means "all the world."
Leech	A human who drinks a Vampire's blood, yet retains free will. Often they keep the Vampire as a prisoner, or offer great rewards for the Blood.
Lextalionis	The Code of the Kindred, created by Caine. It suggest Biblical Justice — an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Vide *Traditions*.

Lineage	Just as mortals trace their bloodlines by birth, so Vampires trace their own Lineages, forming the *Clans*.
Methuselah	An Elder who no longer lives among the other Kindred. Often they belong to the Inconnu.
Neonate	A young, newly created Kindred. Vide *Fledgling*, *Whelp*.
Osiris	A Vampire who surrounds himself with mortal or Ghoul followers in a cult or coven, to better obtain sustenance. The practice is less common than it once was.
Papillon	The red light district, the area of the city made up of nightclubs, gambling houses and brothels. Thought of as the prime hunting ground of the city.
Progeny	A collective term for all the Vampires created by one Sire. Less formal, and less flattering, is *Get*.
Praxis	The right of Princes to rule, as well as the rules, laws and customs enforced.
Primogen	The leaders in a city or the ruling council of Elders. Those who support the Prince and make her rule possible.
Regnant	One who has Blood Bond over another Kindred, through giving them Blood three times. Vide *Blood Bond*.
Retainers	Humans who serve a Vampire master. They are either Ghouls or mentally Dominated by their Vampire master. This control is sometimes so complete that the mortal is unable to take any action of his own volition.
Siren	A Vampire who seduces mortals, but does not kill them and takes only a little blood after putting the mortal into a deep sleep. Vide *Tease*.
Suspire	The dream dance of the final stage of the quest for Golconda.
Third Mortal	Caine, the progenitor of all Vampires, according to the *Book of Nod* (qv).
Thrall	A Vampire who is held under a Blood Bond, and thus under the control of another Kindred.
Vitæ	Blood.
Wassail	The Final release and the last Frenzy. Occurs when the last vestiges of Humanity are lost and a Vampire plunges into a world of chaos.
Whelp	A contemptuous term for any young Vampire, it originally was used only in regard to one's own Progeny.
Wight	Human, mortal.
Witch-hunter	A human who searches for Vampires in order to kill them.

Vulgar Argot

These are the words used most frequently by the Anarchs, the younger Vampires who disdain and/or ignore the Traditions of the Elders. They seek to establish their own culture, and coming up with their own slang is part of the process. Of course, they will use Old Form when they do not have another word for the same thing, and some Elders have even begun to use the Vulgar form of a word so as to create a greater effect when they speak.

Alleycat	A Vampire who does not have a Haven of any kind, but resides in a different place each night. Also used to refer to those Kindred who feed off the homeless and other street people.
Banking	The practice, most widespread among younger Kindred, of taking blood from blood banks. Chilled blood so long from the body is less satisfying, but some Childer delight in entering a blood bank and drinking to excess. This is seen by many Princes as breaking the Masquerade.
Banker	A Kindred who engages in the practice of Banking.
Black Hand	A Sect that involves itself in diabolism. Vide *Sabbat*.
Blister	A Vampire who has contracted an infectious disease, and now

But Shelzza has other thoughts for herself and her King. She prefers him as a puppet than to be without him at all.

	spreads it to each donor from whom they feed.
Blood Line	The Vampire's heritage. Vide *Lineage*.
Blood Bond	Being bound to another Vampire as a result of taking the *Blood Oath*. Vide *Regnant*.
Blood-Doll	A Kindred who is held in Regnant by another. The doll is Blood Bonded and no longer free.
Butterfly	One who mingles among the high society of mortals, and will only feed upon the wealthy and famous.
Casanova	A Vampire who delights in seducing mortals but not killing them and takes only a little blood, erasing the victim's memory of the event when they are finished. There are rumors that the original Casanova was or is a Vampire, but this is not generally believed. Vide *Cauchemar*.
Change, The	The moment and the process of becoming a Vampire. Vide *Becoming*.
Damned, The	The immortal, undead race. All the Vampires as a whole.
Donor	A potential or past source of blood. Typically a human.
Farmer	A derogatory term for a Vampire who keeps animals for the purpose of feeding the Hunger. Vide *Vegetary*.
Fief	A sarcastic term for the Domain of a Clan or Prince.
Head	A Vampire who feeds upon those under the influence of a drug, so as to feel the effect. The term *Head* is used with a suitable prefix if the Vampire prefers a particular drug. Vide *Lush*.
Headhunter	An Elder who hunts other Kindred for their Blood. Vide *Rogue*, *Diablerie*.
Lick	A Vampire. Vide *Kindred*.
Rack, The	The hunting-ground represented by nightclubs, bars, and other places of entertainment where mortals seek to dance, drink and pair off.

Rake	One who habitually uses the *Rack* is a *Rake* in Vulgar argot; *Papillon* and *Gentry* are progressively older terms for the same.
Sandman	A Vampire who feeds only upon sleeping victims. Vide *Cauchemar*.
Slumming	Feeding from the homeless and derelicts. A Vampire who does so exclusively is a *Slummer*.
Stalker	A mortal who hunts the Kindred. Vide *Witch-hunter*.
Tease	A term sometimes used for a female *Casanova* (qv).
Turf	The city or section of a city that a Vampire might try to claim for themselves. Vide *Fief*, *Domain*.
Vegetary	A sarcastic term for a Vampire who refuses to take the blood of humans, but relies instead on that of animals. Vide *Farmer*.
Whig	An older Vampire who uses an obsessive interest in mortal fashion and current events in order to counteract the tendency to become distanced from humanity.

El Sabbat (sab' - ăt)

Chapter Eight: Chronicle

No one holds command over me. No man. No god. No Elder. No Prince. What is a claim of age for ones who are immortal? What is a claim of power for ones who defy death? Call your damnable hunt. We shall see who I drag screaming to Hell with me.

— Günter Dörn, *Das Ungeheuer darin*

To understand **Vampire**, you must be able to savor its mood. Its atmosphere is stark, exotic and brooding, but with an underlying sonorous sensuality. **Vampire** is a neo-gothic vision of romance laid atop today's hyper-kinetic MTV world. Dracula meets Prince.

This romance is served by the pathos of it all. In **Vampire**, characters are almost certainly doomed from the moment they first become Vampires. Though they are powerful beyond imagination, they are also cursed. No matter what they do, they remain monsters. The stories in **Vampire** are unique because they all have this element of tragedy. The traditional tragedy of the theater, the tragedy of Shakespeare, consists of a hero coming to a great and horrible demise, as they were fated to from the very beginning. Because of who and what the hero is, and because of the person the hero was, the tragedy is inevitable from the very first act — and the audience knows it. The characters in **Vampire** are almost certainly doomed from the first moment they receive the Kiss of the Embrace — and the players should know it.

However, these characters, who are the paragons of tragic evil, may also become heroes of uncommon valor and virtue. These Vampires are evil, not because of who they are but because of what they are. As drinkers of blood, they have the taint of evil within. They are tragic because they care about their evil but can ultimately do nothing about it. The characters in **Vampire** are expected to be heroes — they must care about what they have become and about what they may soon be.

Justice is only served if the good overcomes the evil — the monsters must lose. Thus, for the Vampire character to find some way to "win," they must somehow become heroic. They must defeat the monster within by exerting self-restraint, nurturing the impulses of human virtue, and displaying genuine courage. Sometimes the tragedy of Final Death is the Vampire's only hope of heroic escape.

The possibility exists that they may find a way to escape the curse and become mortal once again. Not all characters will seek this, but for a majority it will be their overwhelming motivation, their all-consuming drive, especially as the steady loss of Humanity takes its toll.

Other Vampires will seek Golconda, the plateau of control that some of the Kindred manage to reach, where their basic drives and instincts do not control them so strongly. This is even more difficult to attain than the escape from the curse of undeath, but it is sought after at least as much.

The characters spend much of their time combating evil, but instead of fighting diabolists or evil scientists or monsters as in other games, they are combating that which is inside of themselves, that makes them evil. Thus, this is a much more intense game than you might be used to; the issues and stories involved are not for the weak-of-heart.

Contents

This Chapter describes how to create and run a Chronicle. Not only is there a description of how a Chronicle works, but advice on how to keep the level of player interest high throughout its course. Chronicles are not always easy to create, simply because of the scope of the story which they describe. A Chronicle is most often created through a series of playing sessions and a number of different stories

The Chronicle is more than the sum of a number of playing sessions and stories, it is in fact a story itself. The Chronicle is the saga told by the progress of the characters' lives. It shares many of the same things that a series of movies does, only it can last an even longer period of time.

A Chronicle has a beginning and an ending. It has obstacles for the characters to overcome and it has a constant motif. The Chronicle more than likely has some of the same villains appearing again and again to antagonize the characters. It is not simply a string of stories slapped together — not unless you are willing to settle for something mediocre. A Chronicle must be created with as much patience, creativity and grace as a model plane or an oil painting.

A typical Chronicle will last for many years (player years) because it is based upon the lives of Vampires, who are immortal. Thus, it is possible for a single Chronicle to cover several hundred years in time. However, because Gehenna is fast approaching, it is likely that your Chronicle will take place over years or decades, not centuries. Several stories may occur within weeks of one another, but sometimes stories will be separated by years of down time, which you may

describe to the players but not roleplay through. Stories are the exciting but infrequent events that punctuate long years of quieter pursuits.

You need to begin designing the Chronicle long before the players create their characters. Hopefully, you will have already spent several hours of work, at the minimum, in determining the substance and texture of the Chronicle you want to run. Everything else depends on what you come up with initially. The sharper your ideas, the better everything else will be later on. It can be time-consuming to create a Vampire Chronicle, but later on it will save you time when you create the stories.

You have a number of decisions to make as you create the Chronicle. First, you need to decide the Setting of the Chronicle — what city is it set in and what is that city like? (We recommend Chicago, or another city nearby, since this will be the location of much of our supplemental material.) Secondly, you need to determine what connects the characters and what *their* motivations will be. Third, the primary antagonists of the players need to be delineated. What are their motivations?

She brings him to her, controlling him as she would a mortal.

Fourth, a plan of the progression of the Chronicle should be constructed, to detail where you want to take it. Lastly, you need to determine the motif of the Chronicle, which describes the reoccurring images, subjects, moods and special rules you will include in it. Making these decisions wisely will insure that your Chronicle runs smoothly.

Elements of a Chronicle

- Setting
- Characters
- Antagonists
- Plan
- Motif

Name

Sometime before the Chronicle begins, you will need to name it. The name can be fairly important, for it sets the tone from which everything else follows. The name should be suggestive of the theme and potential of the Chronicle without giving anything away. Every character is described by the Chronicle in which she belongs, so the players are likely to be pestering you for a name. It is best to have it made up from the start, so it actually sounds good. Often a name can be very simple, named after the city in which it is set, or the Prince who controls it. Our example of a Chronicle, *Forged in Steel*, is given in this chapter, and you are welcome to use it.

Setting

All the vampires walkin' through the valley
Move west down Ventura Blvd.
And all the bad boys are standing in the shadows
And the good girls are home with broken hearts.

— Tom Petty, *Free Fallin'*

In **Vampire**, it is not necessary to create the world, for it is so much like our own, but the counterpart to it is creating the city. The city is the locus of the **Vampire** game. Below are some ideas on how to create and what to include in your city, but establishing the essential qualities of it are your responsibility.

You need to make the setting realistic and consistent so that the players will believe in it. With each story you run, define the city a bit better but don't give away everything at once. As the Chronicle progresses, add details of geography, custom, plot, and so on. Build it bit by bit and at whatever pace you choose.

The setting is where the plot of the story takes place — the more interesting and exotic it seems the more the plot will

come to life. You must make sure the design of the city meshes well with the design of the overall Chronicle. If the Chronicle is going to be about corruption, then the city ought to be corrupt as well, both the mortal and the Vampire parts of it.

The mortal structure of the city is fairly easy to determine. Though this is a Gothic-Punk world, much of it is identical to what we know the world to be. Get a travel book for that city, or write the Chamber of Commerce. If you live in the city where you are setting the Chronicle, details shouldn't be a problem at all. You will want to change a few details here and there to suit the mood of the game, but the basic structure is in place.

Creating the Vampire aspect of the city is a little more difficult. You need to decide how the power structure functions and who controls it. The Prince is likely to be the single most important individual in a city, but that it not always the case. The Prince might be the actual ruler, or he could simply be a figurehead, with some Elder is the shadows manipulating things. The politics among the Kindred of a city are often quite ferocious, so decide how they work in your city. How many different "sides" are there? Why are they opposed to one another? Members of various Clans could be antagonistic, or the classic Elder vs. Anarch conflict could be the major source of division.

You need to decide what groups are in opposition to the group or individual who controls the city, and which groups support the status quo. How do the Kindred of the city interact with the mortal rulers? Are the police becoming suspicious, or do ruling Kindred control the mortal authorities?

Some cities, especially the smaller ones, might have very few or no conflicts between the Kindred who live there. How interesting would that be? Don't make your cities one of those peaceful ones. Fill it with enough intrigue and inequity to power a hundred game sessions or at least plan future strife for the peaceful city you create now.

Characters

Her lips were red, her looks were free
Her locks were as yellow as gold.
Her skin was white as leprosy.
The Nightmare Life-in-Death was she,
Who thicks man's blood with cold.

— Samuel Taylor Coleridge

The character is the basis of the Chronicle, as it is for the sake of the character that it is told in the first place. The character is always the focus of events, and the decisions of the characters decide the course of the plot. Therefore, before a Chronicle begins, you must prepare the characters. A great Chronicle requires equally great characters.

One thing you must decide before the Chronicle begins is why the characters are together — why they form a Brood. Of course, the players will have a lot to say about this, perhaps even the primary say, but because you have created the Chronicle, it is up to you to make the characters fit into it well. Ask yourself what kind of relationship the characters have with one another? Why are they friends? Why do they work together?

The most important thing to do is make sure that each character in the group has adequate and sensible enough motivations to do what you would like them to do. Do they have some reason for being a part of the group? In short, will the characters make sense in terms of the Chronicle?

The Prelude is a great way to get characters prepared for the Chronicle. It can explain to them the nature of the setting, contacts for them to go to in times of need, and an understanding of what will be required of them. Motivations can often be created and expanded during the Prelude as well, making a complete Character out of one that was paper thin. Use the Prelude to prep your players, so that when the action begins, they will be ready with the right sort of character.

Sometimes you may want the characters to be from the same Clan. You should generally avoid this, because players like to have a choice, but for some Chronicle concepts it can work very well to focus the characters and forge a team spirit among the players.

If nothing else works, you may want all the players to choose a personal history in common and presume that their characters were friends before they were transformed into Vampires. If your players are forever fighting among themselves and have little trust for one another, then this can be an excellent way to bring them together. At the very least, they can have been friends during their Neonate period before they were released by their Sire.

Do what you need to do to make the characters work in the context of the Chronicle. If the players are not cooperative, find ways to make them so. A system of rewards and punishments (experience points, Humanity) can perform wonders on the attitudes of the players.

Antagonists

Good morrow, masters: put your torches out,
The wolves have prey'd; and look, the gentle day,
Before the wheels of Phoebus, round about
Dapples the drowsy east with spots of grey.

— William Shakespeare, *Othello*

The characters will always need someone to fight, so you are going to have to create some "monsters" of your own. Antagonists can be nearly any sort of adversary, human or

Kindred, monumental or small, animate or inanimate. For the characters to have something to do, they must face obstacles. An antagonist, at base, is an obstacle for the characters to defeat or to rise over.

Most often, antagonists are villains, individuals who oppose the characters and are nasty enough to learn to hate. Villains are essential and they're fun. But for them to work best, you need to make them realistic, complete, powerful and suspenseful. When you need the characters' goals to be thwarted, bring in a villain. Over time, you want to get your players to really hate the villains — it will make the villain's defeat much more palpable. Therefore, you must make your villains eminently hateful. You need to start early, however, by building up your villains from game session to game session. If your villains are an integral part of the Chronicle, they will make a lot more sense and be a much more powerful force.

The Chronicle might be based around a single enemy who may have the influence and status to command many minions. The object might be to defeat this enemy, or merely survive the enemy's attacks. The characters may even have to discover the identify of the enemy. The enemy could be anyone from the Prince of the city to the Ancient who secretly controls the Prince, or a mundane witch-hunter to a powerful voodoo wizard. The single enemy is the simplest form of creating antagonists. If you have multiple enemies, you can complicate matters immensely (perhaps the enemies are enemies of each other).

It is likely that most antagonists are many times more powerful than the characters, and that the characters will not be able to successfully act against them directly. Certainly, they will be able to combat the lesser minions of the enemy, but the characters would not survive if faced with a direct confrontation. The characters must move against powerful enemies indirectly by gathering clues and allies, engaging in guerilla warfare, and probing the defenses of their antagonists.

See the Conflicts section of the Storyteller Chapter (page 238) to get an idea of how your villains can conflict with your characters. See the end of this chapter for descriptions of a number of different types of antagonists, as well as examples and rules for creating your own.

Plan

The best things happen at the wrong time; the rest happens not at all. The conscientious historian will repair this defect.

— Herodotus

You need to create a plan for how you want the Chronicle to progress. Where should the stories take the characters and how will the Chronicle eventually end (if ever)? It is a blueprint for creating not only the beginning of a good Chronicle, but the entire thing.

The plan details where you want the Chronicle to go and what you eventually want the characters to be doing. More than likely, the Chronicle will end up differently than you intended. Indeed, if it does end up exactly where you thought it would, it might mean you aren't providing the players enough opportunity to exercise their free-will.

The plan is intended to be a guide to help you understand what you want the Chronicle to be — it's a means of forcing yourself to make it dynamic, with changes in tempo, mood and content.

Always try to stage a great ending to the Chronicle. Never let it slowly decline into an obscure death. Will the Chronicle end with the death of the characters as part of a heroic sacrifice, or will they somehow manage to become mortal once again?

Motif

I am intense, I am in need,
I am in pain, I am in love.

— Indigo Girls, *Blood and Fire*

A motif is a recurring subject, theme or idea that comes up again and again in an artistic work, and in some ephemeral way connects the work. For your Chronicle to be truly complete, you need to create a motif for it. You need some sort of recurring feature to provide continuity and unite your Chronicle.

You need to decide what will be the dominant idea or feature of the Chronicle. What are you going to try to say? What issues galvanize and connect every story? What is the subject of the Chronicle and how will it be presented? What style will you use as a Storyteller? Will you be abrasive, understated, gory, combative? What effect do you hope to gain by using that style?

Often you can invent a unique feature or encounter that the characters can meet or interact with repeatedly. A distinctive and recurring character, theme, mood, place or object can connect everything together. This can be anything from a club which they frequent to a bum they keep meeting who's drunk ramblings contain an uncanny wisdom. Perhaps the characters keep driving past a statue of heroic Achilles, you keep mentioning it, and then one day they figure out the significance of what you are doing. These recurring features can do a great deal to add a mood and sense of significance to your Chronicle. Invent something appropriate and unique, and weave it into your stories.

Will there be special rules in the Chronicle that cause it to work differently than most Vampire Chronicles?

Will you make the Frenzy rolls more strict, or perhaps make Humanity more precious?

Chronicle Concepts

It is precisely the soul that is the traveler; it is of the soul and of the soul alone that we can say with supreme truth that 'being' necessarily means 'being on the way.'"

— Gabriel Marcel

Below are a number of descriptions of different types of Chronicles you could run playing **Vampire.** They are detailed from the point of view of the type of group they require. There are three different categories of Chronicle concepts: Classic, Roleplaying and Bizarre. You should have some idea of the mood and gaming style of your players, so choose accordingly.

Classic

These are the most archetypical Chronicles, the classic examples of what a **Vampire** Chronicle can be about.

• **Gang:** The characters are a group of Anarchs in a major city who have have formed a Brood molded in the pattern of a street gang. To the mortals, they appear as a prototypical rough gang of hoodlums, but their lives are far more complex than that. They live death as exuberantly as they can, attempting to eke as much enjoyment and pleasure out of their existences as possible. Proud and often haughty, they hold in scorn all those who are not members of their "pack." At sometime, however, they may learn something of what their existence is truly about.

The characters must constantly protect their "turf" (hunting ground) against other gangs of Anarchs (if there are any) as well from other Vampires who might encroach upon it. The other Kindred do not acknowledge that it is the characters' turf, for it was not given to them by the Prince, so they might sometimes fight to support their claims. But

His body is her's, but his mind is yet his own.

since the "turf" is the only thing they have, the characters protect it fiercely.

They ignore and scorn the power of the Prince and pretend that he has no power, but they understand the Traditions and fear the power of the Justicars. Much like mortal gangs, they rebel against the establishment, only in their case, the establishment is less restricted by the law. Brujah make great Gang Characters, though the characters could be from any Clan.

Often the Vampire gangs have a strong connection with mortal gangs, and may even control them (treat mortal gangs as either Allies or Herd). In fact, each member of the Vampire gang may be the leader of a mortal gang, which each character should create and develop. However, there should still be an overall leader of the characters' gang as well.

For this Chronicle only, you may wish to assume that the population of Vampires in a city is actually twice as big as is indicated in the Setting chapter. This will help make the "turf" wars understandable, and will make sense of other rival gangs of Anarchs.

One variation of this concept is to let the characters have some connection with organized crime — in return for money, prestige, power or revenge, they perform certain services for their employers. The characters might even be the bosses of their own mob. You will need to decide what sort of syndicate they are involved in. Detail it in depth, including its enemies and sources of income.

Death would have been better than an existence such as this, but he charms Shelzza with courtesy.

The characters probably will not have any money, so don't let any character have Resources of over 1. Don't let them have Status at all. They might even be renegade Kindred, created without the permission of the Prince.

This concept can evoke a lot of atmosphere. All in all, paint a picture of the sick and twisted underarm of the city.

• **Wanderers:** The characters travel around the country on motorcycles (or perhaps in an RV or stolen car), finding a safe place to sleep every night. A tightly-formed Brood, they are like a traveling wolf pack. They are focused on survival, and are bound to run into the Lupines at one point or another. There is much that they will discover on their journey. Members of the Gangrel Clan would be perfect, as they can sleep beneath the Earth's surface.

You need to decide why the characters are wanderers. Perhaps they are hunted, and continue their headlong flight out of terror and a strong sense of self survival. The characters must rely upon one another to survive in a hostile and constantly changing world. Each story could have them arrive in a new city, attempting to adjust and make themselves at home, and each time their efforts result only in their flight once again. Just keep those players running and don't let them stop. Keep 'em scared, use the technique of suspense, and don't reveal the full identity of who and what hunts them. You'll need something for them to run away from, like a powerful antagonist. This could be their Sire or Prince, a witch-hunter or investigator, or even their mortal families or old mortal enemies.

Another possibility is to let the characters form the nucleus of a rock band (or even classical, folk, jazz or country ensemble). They are trying to make it as Vampire musicians. Perhaps they were a band before and were all taken by the same Sire, or perhaps they have decided to do this after being Vampires for some time. Whatever the case, they are bound to get in considerable trouble as the Camarilla and most of the Elders vigorously suppress any activities that threaten the Masquerade.

Each character will need a rating in Music (unless they play the manager), and make sure you know who plays which instrument. Who will be the lead singer? Who is hyper enough to be the drummer? Mellow enough to be the bass guitarist? Creative enough to break those stereotypes? What kind of music do they play — dance, pop, punk, acid, rap? They start in the local clubs of their native city, but success may bring a concert tour. How do they handle this?

Whatever type of wanderers the characters are, the focus needs to be the demands of survival. As the Storyteller, you need to make survival a real challenge. Don't let it come

easily. Accentuate the side-effects of a life as a fugitive. Because the characters are wanderers, they will not have Retainers or Influence. If it will be a factor, encourage the players to take Protean, so that they will have Earth-Meld. The setting, of course, will vary wildly from story to story, so you will have to always be on your toes and will need to do more preparation work than with most Chronicles. Before you start, it is a good idea to know the political structure of many different cities.

• Diablerie: Whatever the unique motivations and desires of the characters, they are united by their desire for true power and their belief in the best means for obtaining it. The characters are engaged in the dangerous and destructive struggle to locate, exterminate and drink the Blood of their Elders — and in so doing effectively advancing from one Generation to the next. As a group, they are able to take on these extremely powerful beings. However, the possibility for Humanity loss should be extremely high, especially if the Elder had any highly rated Virtues (ie. he was a nice guy).

This is a simple hunt and kill Chronicle. Each story, the characters should be presented with a new target, likely some sort of evil and oppressive Elder. You will want to tie some basic mortal issues into the Chronicle, so that it is a little more involved than a hack-and-slash adventure. Force the characters to pick and choose among targets, investigate them before they go in for the kill, and spare those who have some goodness in them. At some point, you will want to have the characters face their own vigilantism and ask themselves if they are any better than the ones whom they hunt. For the purposes of this Chronicle, you may want to change the rules to allow *all* those who partake in the Blood of an Elder to lower their Generation level, not just one.

• Lords of a City: The characters are the primary Kindred inhabitants of a medium sized city (less than one million), about the size of Charleston, NC; Madison, WI; or Vail, CO. Keep in mind that suburbs are normally considered to be within the Domain of the Prince of the city. Because of the smallness of the city, the characters are likely to be the only Vampires living there. Thus, in some sense, they "own" it.

However, besides the characters, you may want to include a few Elders, yet still make it clear that the characters "own" the city. When danger or peril arrives, it is up to them to protect their "turf." The Elders are likely to be the Mentors of the characters, capable of both providing much assistance and asking for help in return.

You will need to create a full and real city, with some sort of crisis on the horizon for the characters to roleplay through. It could be anything from a powerful Coterie of Elders seeking a new city to control after being exiled from the one they once ruled, to a Methuselah who simply wants peace. Play up the travails of being in charge and being responsible. If the characters meet with failure, you need to "reward" them with real punishments. If they succeed, however, they must be given real and substantial rewards in turn. From the start, the characters must know what awaits them, whatever the result of their efforts.

Possibly, the characters are Anarchs who have taken the city from the Elders who once ruled it. Now they will have to survive the arrival of Justicars who wish to determine what occurred and if any Traditions were broken. Other Elders may come in order to punish the characters, or simply to take the city for themselves.

If the players are up to it, one of their characters can be the Prince (the first session could be "electing" one of them to the post after the old Prince dies or leaves). But as any City Manager knows, it ain't easy to run a city.

Refugees: The characters are castoffs from another city, perhaps even of a Clan not of the Camarilla. Each has run away from their Prince, Sire and Clan — indeed, they might even have been of the Sabbat. The city in which the Chronicle is based is where they have fled for refuge. However, they don't fit in and must spend much of their energy and time hiding both from mortals and other Kindred.

The Chronicle begins with them newly arrived in town, without a clue as to the power structure or the Havens of the other Kindred. Don't give the characters any Background points, to reflect this and to drive the point home. A little tough perhaps, but they are refugees! The characters are new to the city, so detail more of the mundane aspects than normal, including the things only a newcomer might notice.

They get a rats-eye view of the underlife of a city. Eventually, they may be accepted into the Camarilla, but it won't be easy. At the start, they will probably not reveal themselves to the Prince, so later they may get in big trouble for breaking one of the Tradition — though they may not even know of the Traditions.

This concept has the eternal theme of "the new kids in town." Make the players truly afraid, and try to convince them that the other Kindred will kill them if they are found, even if it is not true.

Roleplaying

These are Chronicles that emphasize roleplaying, and thus have little combat or dice rolling. This sort of Chronicle is intended for advanced roleplayers only.

• Brood of a Prince: The characters are the newly-created Brood of the Prince of a city. Their Sire is either a Vampire of great nobility or a total bastard. The characters thus support the Elders of the city, and work to control and restrain the wilder impulses of the Anarchs.

Making sure that the mortal authorities of the city don't discover the Kindred can be a full time job — you have to suppress evidence, intimidate officials, and cover up deaths.

You might want to make the characters a little more powerful than normal, giving them more Freebie points (20?). Most of the Chronicle can be centered around the Haven of the Sire, but the city needs to be detailed as well. You must create may different areas of potential conflict and aggravation — who is out there to give the characters trouble? Remember that their Sire is a Prince as well, and thus has many demands made upon her as well as innumerable constraints. Does she take it out on the characters? Can the characters trust the Prince, or are they only pawns in the end?

• **Mortal Politics:** For some reason, the characters wish to manipulate politics, either in their city or on a national level — probably because other Vampires are attempting to manipulate it in an opposite way. Vampires control many of the institutions in the mortal world, especially those which are centrally located and controlled by one city. Those institutions might be employed by Vampires who control them as pieces in the Jyhad. This means the characters might get involved in campaigning, political espionage, and even electoral cheating (or preventing the other group from doing the same). Such intrigue-oriented activities are rare but not unheard of among the Kindred; it frequently can be traced to an element of the Jyhad.

Influence and Resources would be very appropriate Background Traits for the characters. You need to detail the participants in the political race and their importance to the Kindred. This can make for a very intrigue-filled and bloody Chronicle. Play up the plot twists and the intensity of what is going on.

• **The Becoming:** Start the players out as humans and take them through the whole process of being created. It is a very traumatic, intense and emotional experience. But you have to decide why the characters were chosen and why they were selected as a group. Are they the Brood of a single Sire, or perhaps the Progeny of the Elders of a single city who created many Neonates at a single time (if you are exceptionally adventurous, the players could roleplay themselves becoming Vampires)?

The goal of the characters, of course, is to find a way to become human again. They have left behind people whom they love and who need them. The focus of the Chronicle is their increasingly desperate desire to escape the curse. What lengths will they go to in order to attain their goal, and will they, tragically, destroy their Humanity in the process?

Characters start with no Disciplines, they will gain their three points over the course of the Chronicle—as they are trained by their Sire. You need to describe the Haven of the Sire in detail, as well as his immediate enemies and friends. The Sire must be an exquisitely complete character. Make the Haven and the Chronicle as a whole have a claustrophobic feel, so that when they finally move on they will truly feel a sense of wonder and anticipation.

• **A Normal Life:** The characters are attempting to continue their mortal lives even after the Embrace. They must somehow balance their two lives, and keep the one life a secret from the other. The characters must learn to rely upon one another to succeed. If they are well-known for any reason, it can make it all the more difficult. Play out the Prelude in length, to make the characters as real and detailed as possible, but start the Chronicle soon after they are Embraced. The whole point is to roleplay through the transition period.

You will need to detail the everyday worlds of each character in order to give them something to interact with. Provide something of compelling interest in the city as well to draw them into the world of Vampires. Juxtapose the two opposing worlds as often and as vividly as you can, and force the characters to balance the two of them.

• **Camarilla:** The characters are heavily involved in Camarilla politics. They are united by an ambition they share or similar views on what should be done. Perhaps they could meet at a Conclave meeting and unite after discovering that everyone else opposes their point of view. More than likely, there is some ongoing controversy splitting the Kindred of the city, perhaps concerning the breaking of Traditions. More than likely, a Justicar will arrive to attempt to settle things before the Chronicle comes to an end.

The characters are among the most feared and respected Kindred in the Camarilla. They are the enforcers who travel from city to city, assisting the Prince and the Justicars in maintaining the status quo. Perhaps created as the Brood of a powerful Elder, they may actually begin the game with five or more Discipline points. If they ever have to go into Sabbat Domain, they will need it.

Give the characters 25 Freebie points each, so that their characters will be capable of combating more powerful Kindred. Teamwork will be essential regardless. They might have Mentor or Status. They will travel, but will likely be based in a single city.

Present the players with moral conflicts like Duty vs. Justice. Do they discover the truth or do they continue to mindlessly serve their masters? Or are their masters right? Play up the intrigue — the characters should not know what is going on, and should be able to trust no one. Ask yourself what is going on? What is the nature of this conflict? Make sure that it is as real and engaging as you can make it.

• The Quest: The Characters seek Golconda as a means of not merely escaping, but transcending their curse. This is a somewhat existential approach to roleplaying, for the characters look for that which is not real, yet is true, and for that which is illusion, yet so essential. The quest leads the characters into their own souls, so it is absolutely essential that they be fully created and realized. Often it is best to transform a Chronicle into a quest after it has been going a while.

Bizarre

This type of Chronicle is for those who like things that are truly different. These concepts describe some very unique ways to play **Vampire**. Try them out only if you have a taste for the strange.

• Fanatics: The characters can play IRA partisans, Muslim fundamentalists, or eco-anarchists. They are members of some sort of extremist group who will go to nearly any lengths to carry out their cause. The characters are dogmatic, idealistic and totally committed to their group. Though they have become Vampires, they have not given up their mortal beliefs (not yet at least) and they use their powers to do whatever they can for the cause. Can the characters gain the wisdom of restraint in time to preserve their own Humanity? Start with them carrying out their missions, but gradually bring in other issues and themes. Eventually, they must leave the cause in order to preserve their Humanity or to have any hope of Rebirth or Golconda.

The characters should all be from the same fanatic group. They likely volunteered for the same duty, and it brought them into contact with their eventual Sire. Define the nature of the extremist group to which they belong, and have their opponents fully worked out as well.

• The Cult: The characters have created a cult around themselves, which offers them security and easy access to Vitæ. However, something happens which threatens their idealistic existence. They could be the object of devotion for the cult, or simply the figures who manipulate it from behind the scenes. It could be a mixture of both, with one character serving as the charismatic leader, and the others as the manipulators and organizers. The characters are cheating these people, and they are using them for evil purposes. You need to work the effects of such an attitude into the stories. It could certainly lead to a loss of Humanity.

Each character will likely have a Herd rating to reflect the members of the cult, and perhaps Resources as well. Unless the players wish to establish the cult on their own, starting from nothing, you will have to detail what it is and how it works — more than likely with the participation of the players.

• Patrons: The characters are patrons to some human institution, such as an orphanage, a small business, a church or even a baseball team. The characters have been cast out from even their own perverse society, lost much of their Humanity, and been left to suck the blood of the dead and dying. The characters are do gooders, but the more good they do, the more they are expected to do.

They seek to promote their institution in every way they can. Protecting and serving it is the focus of their existence. All you have to do is figure out why they are oriented in this manner.

You need to decide what type of institution the characters are protecting, and what problems are facing it. It is a good idea to let the players decide, so that they feel the urge to protect and nurture it. If you simply tell them they must protect it, they will feel like you have taken away their free will.

• High Society: The characters mingle in the high society of a major city, and become embroiled in its politics and affairs. Though it is only a game for them, it is a most intriguing one and it may be a means for the characters to compete with one another (e.g. who can seduce Vladimir the Russian pianist first?). However, by being involved with the elite of a city, the characters may be able to manipulate events and decisions at times of crisis. If the police are about to launch a major investigation, such contacts can be essential. Mingling with the high society could be the "duty" assigned them by the Prince or another Elder. Play up the elegance and beauty of the setting, so as to make the stain of blood even more vivid.

Before the game starts, give each character an automatic Resources of 3, and encourage them to purchase that Background Trait even higher. You will need to decide who are the leaders, gossips, hosts, wannabe's and outcasts of this high society.

• Historical

Imagine roleplaying **Vampire** in the age from which much of the legends stem — the Middle Ages of historical Europe. The Vampire comes most frequently from the nobility, the ruling class of the time. It is a time of decadence of an overtly wealthy ruling class. Entire regions may be under the control of the eternal rules of the Undead. However, the populace grows gradually restless, and when the envoys from Rome learn what is going on, the Vampires may be facing a Crusade. Though the characters should not be truly evil Vampires, they can be trapped in the same situation as the evil ones.

It could go something like this: converted against their will after losing a baronial war with their archenemies, the characters find themselves vassals to those who they despise above all others. Yet there is no return to the lives they once knew. Ultimately, they must choose between survival and morality — or chart a careful course between the two poles.

You might wish to place the Chronicle a little bit later on, such as in the Renaissance or in the Victorian period. Choose any time period and set your Chronicle there. Just make sure you know a little history before you start, or at least more than your players.

• Other World

Though **Vampire** is already set in a Gothic-Punk world, you can elect to set it in a place even more distant from our own reality than that. You can do something really radical with it, by placing it in otherwhen.

Your Chronicle could be fantasy, post holocaust, science fiction or even cyberpunk. You can twist and change the setting to nearly anything you can imagine, though it can help your players visualize your setting if it is taken from a movie or a novel. You may even wish to set this game in the Vampire world created by Anne Rice in her novels, similar to our Gothic-Punk, but significantly different all the same.

Again he rouses before her. He tests his limbs and delights when they respond as he alone requires.

Depending on what type of setting you use, you can create a radically different mood for your Chronicle.

To go a little further, you can craft your Chronicle around the heartbeat of a full fantasy world such as the horrific worlds of H. P. Lovecraft and Edgar Allen Poe or even **J.R.R** Tolkien's Middle Earth. **Vampire** can work well in nearly any kind of medieval fantasy campaign, and perhaps even in a whole world where Vampires make up the immortal ruling class exclusively.

Forged in Steel

This city is afraid of me. I have seen its true face. The streets are extended gutters and the gutters are full of blood and when the drains finally scab over, all the vermin will drown.

— Rorschach's Journal, *The Watchmen*

What follows is a brief example of a **Vampire** Chronicle. It shows some of the preparation work that can be done before a **Vampire** Chronicle begins. It is neither complete nor inadequate. If you intend to use this for your own Chronicle however, plan on spending some more preparation time fleshing out what is presented here. Though the information that follows is enough to begin the Chronicle, the more detail you have developed the better it will go.

This Chronicle was created by the Storyteller (Mark) and was designed specifically for the players (Stewart, Lisa and Steve). He didn't know who their characters would be, so some things changed after the Chronicle began.

The name of this Chronicle was taken from the city motto of Gary, Indiana: Built on Sand, Forged in Steel.

The First Step

When Mark first started to conceive of the setting, he sat down and wrote a list of words to describe what feelings and images he wanted the setting to evoke. These helped him more carefully delineate what he wanted the Chronicle to incorporate. After writing down two or three words, he realized that his imagination was centering around a movie he had just seen, "Roger and Me," which was about the decay and poverty in the rust belt. This made him think about Gary, a city just to the east of Chicago, which he had driven through the summer before. He immediately decided to make Gary, Indiana the setting of the Chronicle. He continued to add words to the list by conjuring images of what Gary might be like in the Gothic-Punk world of **Vampire.**

- Old tattered billboards
- Run down
- Beyond hope, total despair
- Rust — Rust Belt
- Steel mills, factories
- Pollution
- Chain-link fences
- Poverty stricken, deteriorating streets
- Abandoned houses
- Lake Michigan
- Run down harbor
- Container ships
- Gothic Cathedral, amidst the ruins
- Squalor and lethargy
- Empty warehouses
- Pool halls
- Uncompleted urban renewal projects
- Abandoned urban renewal projects
- Burnt out street lights
- Greed
- Drugs
- Gangs
- Graffiti
- Projects
- Abandoned stores
- Unemployment
- Opulence and decadence
- Zombie people
- Aging, decaying mansions
- Filth choked rivers

After brooding on it for a while, and using the list of ideas to build from, Mark came up with the overall premise of the Chronicle. He decided that the Chronicle would involve a lot of intrigue, and be crowned with such themes as betrayal and decadence. It was his hope that this sort of atmosphere would fit in well with the feel of the setting.

Because Gary is too small to have much intrigue, he knew that the depth of the intrigue would have to come from Chicago. From that thought sprang the idea of making the cities of Gary and Chicago arch rivals. For generations, the Princes had fought, each with a different powerbase, but with the collapse of the steel industry, so had the power of Gary fallen. Not only are the living of Gary in misery, but so are the Undead. By setting up Gary in opposition to Chicago, Mark hoped to create a dramatic situation from the very start. As a result of this basic concept, he came up with a number of different ideas:

• Gary is in even worse shape than it is in our world. The city is in a terrible state of decay — a perfect place for Vampires to hunt. Few notice any more how many people turn up missing each year. Industry has completely fled the area, leaving a desolate patch of rust known as the Wasteland.

• Gary is ruled over by a Prince who is something less than a Prince. Modius is the arch-rival of Lodin, the Prince of Chicago, and at one time they were fairly well matched. Modius controlled the unions while Lodin controlled business. However, Lodin purposely destroyed the steel industry in order to destroy Modius' powerbase. He was so successful that Modius lost almost all of his power. Today, he is only a pale reflection of his formerly combative self. Lodin has won, hands down.

• The success of Lodin over Modius was capped when Lodin was able to win away a Conclave. Twenty three years ago, as a last ditch effort to defeat Lodin, Modius convinced the Toreador Justicar to call for a Conclave to be held in Gary. It ended abysmally, and reconvened in Chicago the next day. Though Lodin was unable to depose Modius, he was able to secretly force Modius to agree to "confer" with Lodin on all major decisions.

• The Prince of Chicago has banned the creation of Neonates for the last fifteen years, in an attempt to gain more control over the Anarchs. However, this has simply led the Vampires of Chicago to bring their Neonates to Gary to release them. Modius is known to welcome newcomers.

• Chicago is known for the vehement and subtle intrigue of its inhabitants. The Jyhad is constantly in motion in Chicago, some even whisper than an Ancient is active in this city.

Setting

After completing his conception, Mark sat down and got into the nitty-gritty work of designing the setting. This was essentially the task of creating the city of Gary. It would allow the characters to involve themselves in the riotous Chicago politics without being swept away by them.

Gary is situated on the east side of Chicago, and was once a fairly prosperous industrial area. In the early 70's, however, the steel industry fled abroad, and the city was left with no tax base. Things spiraled downward and the area has today lost nearly 50% of its population. Gary is possibly the most dismal and decaying portion of the nation — and for the sake of the Gothic-Punk world, it is emphasized.

The Kindred of Gary frequently go to Chicago for fun, but they are severely harassed by the Kindred who make Chicago their home. The Prince of Chicago claims greater Chicago as his Domain, but accepts Modius as being a lieutenant — Modius is strident in declaring that he is the Prince of Gary, not one of Lodin's lieutenants. They hate each other and have not met in years.

Some important ares of Gary are:

• **The Wasteland:** Along most of the waterfront and stretching east of the dockyards, is a huge tract of rusting and decaying factories known as the Wasteland. It is bordered by Lake Michigan to the north and the Indiana East tollway to the south. From the highway, it is all too easy to see the devastation, all 8 miles of it. Flakes of rust cover the everything in the Wasteland, and drums of toxic waste can be found everywhere. The Federal Government once stepped in and attempted to track down the ex-owners in order to force a clean up, but they were unable to locate any who still lived in the United States. Once the heartbeat of Gary, these steel mills, factories and warehouses were bustling places 24 hours a day. Now they are almost completely abandoned and empty except for the presence of a number of streetgangs who use the empty buildings as their base of operations. It is thought that some of the Anarchs from Chicago also have a meeting place in the Wasteland. It is difficult to know for sure what lies in the Wasteland, since not even the police dare enter it anymore.

• **Dockyards:** Ocean vessels can reach Gary via the St. Lawrence Seaway. Almost all of the ship cargo bound to and from Chicago is unloaded in Gary. These docks are almost the only source of employment in Gary in these hard times. However, they are not even located in Gary, but are found in the Chicago suburb of East Chicago, which Modius also claims.

• **Gary Exports Co.:** This company in Gary operates a highly successful smuggling venture (mostly drugs and guns) which will transport Vampires on the side. Passengers are placed in a specially-built container, and then placed on board a container freight ship. Customs inspectors are bribed not to look in the container and the Vampires get off in another country at night — all without ever seeing the light of day.

• **The Auction:** In an abandoned church, each Saturday night, a Ghoul named Williams holds an auction — human beings are the commodity for sale. It is a slave auction, of the like not seen for over a hundred years. Men, woman and even children are sold. Most often they are street people simply picked up by William's men, but sometimes they are kidnapped from their homes. All of them are tranquilized so as to make less trouble for him. Many Kindred from Chicago come to the auction, to acquire Vessels which suit their peculiar taste more easily.

Williams seeks both money and Blood from the Vampires, for he wishes to preserve his Ghoulish powers. However he will not drink more than twice from any Vampire, out of fear that he will become Blood Bound once again. It is said that he destroyed the Vampire who first gave him Blood. Whatever the truth, almost all fear him.

This is one of the more disgusting and demented aspects of the Gary Chronicle, and hopefully the characters will take it upon themselves to end it. If the characters use the auction to procure a meal, they need to make a Humanity roll with a 10 difficulty.

Characters

With only a few exceptions, the players may choose nearly any sort of character. Tell the players before they come up with the concept for their characters that they need to make their character fit the "Lords of the City" concept. They should feel responsible for Gary, and strive to keep it free of the domination of the Chicago Kindred. This desire can grow, but the seed should be present from the very start.

Besides the player characters, there are only seven other Vampires in Gary. They include Modius the Prince; Allicia, his Neonate; Michael, who lives in a graveyard; Juggler, the Anarch of Gary; Evelyn, his Neonate; Lucian, the Elder who controls the docks; and Danov, who is a simple wanderer.

The general idea in this fairly simple Chronicle is to set things up with the characters, and then to let them pursue and create their own goals and plots. The best way to do that is to give each character a unique enemy, an antagonist of some sort. In the cast of characters section, we have described a number of potential antagonists, both mortal and Kindred. Pick the appropriate one for each character and then weave them into the Chronicle at opportune times. You don't want to have too heavy a hand though.

Each Prelude will be private, though that may cause the players to be distrustful of each other, and should introduce the players to the setting. It will give you a chance to implant some of the crucial elements of the Chronicle into the character's persona and the player's mind, before the Chronicle even begins. Because the Chronicle is to be complicated and intrigue-filled, it is almost essential that the players are primed to become part of the great "Chicago Game."

All the Sires of the characters are from Chicago. Lodin has forbidden the creation of Neonates for the last 18 years, so the characters' Sires went to Gary to Embrace those who they could not resist (for one reason or another). They have gone against the wishes of their Prince, but they are difficult to punish.

Near the end of the Prelude, bring the players together so that they can know each other before the Chronicle actually begins. Each character will know one or two others, and in this way a network will be formed.

The characters will have likely lived in Gary for only a short time, though some of them certainly could have been here for up to 10 or 15 years. However, for this concept to work best, direct the Prelude so that it works out that most of the characters are unfamiliar with the other Undead inhabitants of the city. It shouldn't be too hard to do, for most Kindred live out their own lives with only the occasional contact with one another.

Special Connections:

Below are listed five different connections you can give your players during the Prelude. They make it easier for the characters to become a part of the Chronicle. It may be difficult to weave these things into the Prelude, but it is well worth the effort. These connections are described in terms of the type of contact it will be, and you should judge each character carefully when you decide what connection to use with them.

• **Romance —** After the character first comes to Gary, she may realize that they are being watched. Do not present it in a way that the character will be frightened or paranoid of, but make it so it seems beautiful, gentle and romantic. It is Allicia who is watching them, though at first they will not know her name. They will only see this beautiful woman wearing yellow lace. If approached, she will always flee, using her Obfuscate to good purpose. She will never speak with the character. Eventually, Allicia will reveal herself fully to the character — using some dramatic means to do so, perhaps by simply waiting for them in their Haven late one night as they return. She still will not speak, but make it obvious that she wishes to share Blood.

• **Charity —** The character meets Michael, perhaps by noticing this strange lurching figure with the pale aura wandering about the city. A first he will be very frightened if anyone presents themselves to him. He may even try to feed from them, if he doesn't realize they are Kindred. Once his fright is over, he will make for a very interesting friend. Michael's loyalty knows no limits — once he has given his love and trust, it can never be broken. However, there is one complication. The witch-hunter, Sullivan Dane, has been watching Michael for some time, and may begin to follow the characters as well after seeing them with Michael. Sullivan plans to uncover all of the Undead of Gary and Chicago (not realizing how many there are) before he hunts them down. Once he is led to Modius, he may begin his hunt and the characters may be blamed by Modius for doing so.

• **Dangerous friendship —** The characters meet Evelyn somewhere in the Wasteland. She is wandering about, exalting in her new powers, reveling in her new perceptions and desires. She is the Neonate of Juggler, but will not admit such at first. It is presumed that she and the characters will become friends, but remember Evelyn has a death wish and will lead the characters into much danger. Thorough Evelyn, the characters will eventually meet her brother, Gregory, a detective in the Chicago Police force. She has broken the Masquerade and told him about her condition. Evelyn doesn't realize the magnitude of what she has done, otherwise she would tell no Kindred about him. Later on, Special Agent Shepard may learn of the characters, through his connection with Detective Stevens. These are dangerous contacts to have, for in times of crisis they may well turn against the characters (who they were using for information). But if a friendship can be struck and trust built, they can come in handy. Of course, if the characters tell them anything, and it is found out, a Blood

The first wooden object he finds falls prey to his grasping hands and delirious mind. He does not realize what he destroys.

Hunt will be called against the characters for they will have broken the Masquerade.

• **Adopted Son —** When one of the characters is introduced to Modius, really play it out. Make the Sire of that character very cruel, but play up Modius' charm and good taste (he's having a good day). The plan is to make Modius and the character good friends, and that means you've go to start out on a good foot. Before the Chronicle begins, you have to reveal Modius' weaknesses, but they should already be friends by then, so that the player can understand why Modius is so. Modius will adopt the character, treating them as if they were his own Childe. He will even introduce the character to Allicia hoping they will hit it off (they won't and Allicia will hate the character). Eventually, Modius will tell the character much about the history of Gary and Chicago, and even reveal how he had been defeated. He describes how he has tired of being Prince, and holds out the promise of making the character Prince, if only independence can somehow be wrested from Evil Lodin.

• **Sinister Secret —** This connection is the most difficult to create, but it is likely to be the most interesting. There a few requirements. First Juggler must be the Sire of the character. However, only he and the character know this fact (only the Storyteller and the player). Juggler makes it very clear to the character that, no matter what, it must remain secret. "If any should discover that you are mine, you would be destroyed as would I." Modius accepts the character as the Childe of a powerful but mysterious Elder from Chicago, and thus treats the character with exaggerated respect (he thinks the character is of an early Generation). Juggler has threatened to kill the character if she reveals him as her Sire. Though he will aid the character if at all possible, Juggler will not do so if it makes it apparent that he is favoring that character.

Antagonists

There are a number of possible enemies for the characters. These antagonists are described at the end of the Cast of Characters. For the most part they are Hunters, individuals who make it their duty to track down and slay Vampires. However, because this is such an intrigue-filled Chronicle, they have developed personalities, so they may not only hunt the characters, but interact with them as well.

Plan

The plan for the Chronicle is to take the characters into deeper and deeper conflict with the Chicago Vampires. Eventually, Mark hopes to be able to provoke the characters into defending Gary from the Chicago Vampires. He doesn't expect that they will support Modius or have any real desire to keep hold of Gary, but they have no other place to run to. Ultimately it will come down to whether they will defend their home or not. The characters and the other Vampires of Gary are likely to become allies of convenience. Therefore, the characters must be made vehemently anti-Chicago. The first story will develop this idea (see the story example in the next chapter).

At first, the conflict will not be so bad, but gradually it will become more and more brutal. Lodin, wants to bring Gary completely under his heel and subjugate its fractious inhabitants once and for all. Turf wars always spill Blood among the Kindred, and this one is likely to be especially harsh. If the characters can hang on long enough, a Conclave will be called by a Justicar to resolve the dispute. The result of such a meeting will depend on many different factors, and should not be preordained.

Hopefully, the issues and direction of the Chronicle will evolve naturally out of the stories. The stories should have a great deal of focus and direction, but the Chronicle should be much more open (in contrast to some of the Chronicle concepts listed earlier, that have a great deal of focus and direction).

Motif

The motif is best described by the word decay. It is not so much decadence that is the trouble in Gary (that's a Chicago problem) but it is the incarnation of the full power of entropy. The Vampires who inhabit Gary have reached the end of their rope, and no longer have the drive or desire to create something from their situation. The setting itself is incredibly deteriorated, polluted, dilapidated and crumbled. Nothing in the city is new or in perfect condition. Neither the city nor its inhabitants have money, nor do they have hope.

On the surface, some things may seem to be strong and vital, in sharp contrast to everything else, such as "Bold Prince Modius." But in the end, underneath the veneer the characters will uncover the same decay as is prevalent elsewhere.

This will present a chance to point out the decay of the real world, by using Gary as a grim and exaggerated example. The decaying infrastructure, the flight of capital, the corruption of public officials, the drug epidemic, the low quality of education, and the decadence of youth are all themes that can be woven into the Chronicle at one time or another. Certainly the basic setting brings across such concepts, so it need only be emphasized through the storytelling.

Cast of Characters:

The Good die young. That is why immortality is reserved for the greatest of evils.

— Daniel Baldwin

Modius

Born: 1765

Apparent age: early forties

Generation: Seventh

Description: Modius is slightly less than average height, but of above average build. He looks like Einstein, only he wears nicer clothing and has a more stately bearing. The hair is about the same.

Clan: Toreador

Nature: Conniver

Demeanor: Cavalier

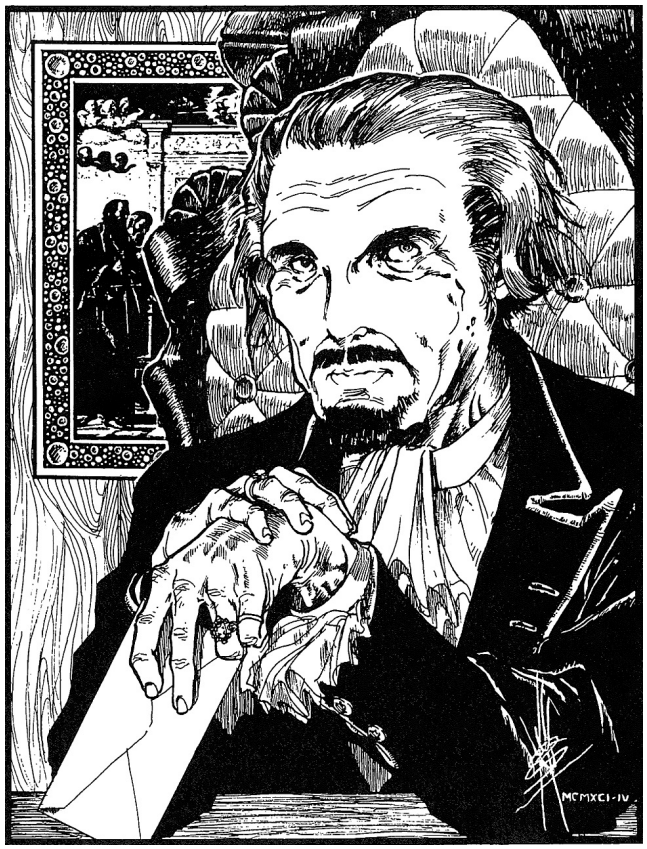
Notes:

Modius has on many occasions claimed that he uses his name, not as an affectation, but as a sigil for his true power. He claims to have been active in the mystic sub-culture of Europe following the Renaissance and to have been present for the formation of the Arcanum. The truth of his past is certainly obscured by his beliefs about what he is.

Modius is a study in contrasts, for he is not what he pretends to be. He lusts after power, yet when he gets it, he is terrified that someone will take it away from him. He is the aggressive yet cowardly Prince of Gary, and he would be happier if he were not Prince. He pretends to still be interested in the Arts and indeed has many paintings of value in his mansion, but in fact he has lost his love for such things. Though he does not realize it, Modius is no longer able to appreciate beauty.

Modius is also difficult, if not near impossible to track or detect. He has the jarring ability of suddenly appearing without warning. There has been some rumor that he has been or is somehow associated with the line Tremere, though in what manner, it is never said. He keeps two servants at his run down mansion, both are elderly black men whom he Dominates so ruthlessly and completely that they are no longer capable of any independent action.

Modius attempts to control Gary with a strong hand. He has thus far been able to keep the young malcontents from the sporadic bursts of terror and violence that have besieged Chicago. However, he does not really have much power to



VAMPIRE™

Modius

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation (Ingratiating)	●●●●○	Intelligence (Practical)	●●●●○
Stamina	●●●○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●○○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●●●○○
Alertness (Paranoid)	●●●●○	Drive	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Etiquette (Aristocratic)	●●●●○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Firearms	●●●○○	Investigation	●●○○○
Dodge	●●○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Law (International)	●●●●○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	●●●○○
Intimidation	●●●○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Leadership	●○○○○	Security	●●○○○	Occult	●●○○○
Streetwise	●●○○○	Stealth	●●●○○	Politics (Machiavellian)	●●●●○
Subterfuge	●●○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	●○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Dominate	●●●●○	Status	●●●○○	Conscience	●●○○○
Obfuscate	●●●●○	Resources	●●●○○		
Thaumaturgy	●○○○○	Retainers	●●○○○	Self-Control	●●○○○
Auspex	●●●○○	Herd	●●○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●○○○○

Other Traits

○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Humanity

●●●●●●○○○○

Willpower

●●●○○○○○○○

□□□□□□□□□□

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt	-1 □
Injured	-2 □
Wounded	-3 □
Mauled	-4 □
Crippled	-5 □
Incapacitated	□

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool

○○○○○○○○○○

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

exert, and is incapable of actually controlling what occurs in his city other than through cajolery and threats. Of the Kindred of Gary, however, only Juggler has learned that so far.

Roleplaying Tips: Be as gracious, polite and tasteful as you can possibly be. Create the attitude of a born gentleman, of a Italian Count. However, you need to let some of your nature show through every once in a while — simply raise your voice and the players will get the message.

Allicia

Born: unknown

Apparent age: late twenties

Generation: Eighth

Description: Short and of average build, Allicia is a dark-haired beauty of apparently mixed European descent. Her wide, full eyes are a sharp near-emerald green that shines against her pale skin. She has notably thin lips, but a wide, easy smile. When angered, however, her face becomes a stone mask of rage. She wears old fashioned clothing, seemingly more suitable to an older looking woman, and nearly always wears a lace shawl.

Clan: Toreador

Nature: Confidant

Demeanor: Caretaker

Notes:

Other than a few wispy memories of red curtains and a smiling woman, Allicia claims to remember nothing of her life before her Becoming. To her, life began with her Becoming in Gary in the late 1930's, when she was Embraced by Modius. For a time, she survived by attaching herself to rich, older gentleman who easily fell to her intriguing ways and beguiling gaze. Her Herd was, in fact, the leading industrialists of Gary who thought of her as their mistress. She would still be with them now, if any were still in Gary.

Allicia does not speak now, and has not spoken for the last 50 years. She can speak, but simply has not felt the desire to do so. If she falls in love with someone, possible a character, she will speak with them, at first with great shyness and difficulty, but after a time with amazement and energy.

She is a familiar figure in the east side of Chicago, and is known for being a rich eccentric who refuses to leave Gary. She leads a simple existence, drawing on funds she acquired before striking out on her own. She does, however, maintain transient connections with one or two of the more notable families in Chicago, but those too will be sliding away as her lack of aging becomes more apparent. Her immortality has become a problem for her as she is beginning to realize that she must break her remaining

VAMPIRE™

Allicia

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●0000	Charisma	●●000	Perception	●●000
Dexterity	●●●00	Manipulation	●0000	Intelligence	●●●00
Stamina	●●000	Appearance Mysterious	●●●●●	Wits	●●●00

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	●●000	Animal Ken	●●●00	Bureaucracy	●0000
Alertness	●0000	Drive	●●000	Computer	●0000
Athletics	●0000	Etiquette	●●000	Finance	00000
Brawl	●0000	Firearms	●●000	Investigation	00000
Dodge	●●000	Melee	●0000	Law	00000
Empathy	●●●00	Music Lyrical Voice	●●●●0	Linguistics	●0000
Intimidation	00000	Repair	00000	Medicine	00000
Leadership	00000	Security	00000	Occult	●●000
Streetwise	●0000	Stealth	●●000	Politics	●0000
Subterfuge	00000	Survival	00000	Science	00000

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Presence	●●●00	Herd	●●●00	Conscience	●●●●●
Dominate	●0000	Resources	●●000		
Auspex	●0000	Mentor	●●●00	Self-Control	●●000
Celerity	●0000		00000		
	00000		00000	Courage	●●000

Other Traits

00000
00000
00000
00000
00000

Humanity ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ 0

Willpower ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Health

Bruised		□
Hurt	-1	□
Injured	-2	□
Wounded	-3	□
Mauled	-4	□
Crippled	-5	□
Incapacitated		□

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

connections with the mortal world. The chances of discovery have become too great.

Now she spends much of her time at the mansion of Modius, her Sire, whom she retains a strong fondness for. He reminds her of the men whom she once loved, and she does not see past her memories to notice the weak man he is today. As she is Blood Bound to him, this is not surprising. Allicia works to make the other Kindred of Gary more loyal to Modius. She thinks she does this only by speaking well of Modius, but it goes deeper than that. He encourages her to pursue her attraction with some of the handsome male newcomers to the city, telling her "you must open your heart to them." She does this by sharing Blood, a bizarre form of orgasmic pleasure, with them. After three times, they become Bonded to her, and through her to Modius, but as she is already Bonded to Modius, she cannot be bound to them. She knows little of the truth of Vampire lore, and does not realize what is actually happening to her. She shares Blood because she is desperate for love of any sort, and even more importantly than that, for the beauty which has fled her life. Allicia is indeed an innocent, though the characters may well believe otherwise after a time.

Roleplaying Tips: Be demure and seductive, but seemingly proper at the same time. Imagine your grandmother when she was a young woman. Evoke the sadness in Allicia, with shy eyes and wistful looks. She will never look directly into someone's eyes unless she is about to share Blood. Since she does not speak, you have to portray her frail beauty through your acting.

Juggler

Born: unknown, Italy

Apparent age: early thirties

Generation: Eighth

Description: Juggler is slightly below average in height and light in build. He has long, shoulder length dark blond hair and dark grey eyes with green-flecked irises. He has average, undistinguished features. Those who remain around him for a time may be unnerved by the fact that he never blinks.

Clan: Brujah

Nature: Jester

Demeanor: Conniver

Notes:

Juggler has few friends in Gary, but is tolerated due to his strange relationship with Modius. It is suspected that Modius, though obviously not his Sire, may owe Juggler some debt that has yet to be repaid (and Juggler may in fact be deliberately holding off payment of that debt). Neither speak of the subject.

VAMPIRE™
Juggler

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●●○○	Perception (Probing)	●●●●○
Dexterity (Graceful)	●●●●●	Manipulation (Cunning)	●●●●○	Intelligence	●●○○○
Stamina	●●●○○	Appearance	●●●○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●●●○○
Alertness (Double Cross)	●●●●○	Drive	●●○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	●●○○○	Etiquette (Gangs)	●●●●○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl (Grappling)	●●●●○	Firearms	●●●○○	Investigation	●●○○○
Dodge	●●●○○	Melee	●●○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Intimidation	●●○○○	Repair	●○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Leadership (Fierce)	●●●●●	Security	●●●○○	Occult	●●●○○
Streetwise (Anarchs)	●●●●○	Stealth	●●●○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	●●○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Obfuscate	●●○○○	Contacts	●●●○○	Conscience	●●○○○
Potence	●●○○○	Herd	●●●●●	Self-Control	●●●●○
Celerity	●●●○○	Allies	●●○○○	Courage	●●●●○
Dominate	●●●●○		○○○○○		
Fortitude	●○○○○		○○○○○		

Other Traits: ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○

Humanity: ●●●●●●●○○○

Willpower: ●●●●●●●●○○ □□□□□□□□□□

Health: Bruised □ Hurt -1 □ Injured -2 □ Wounded -3 □ Mauled -4 □ Crippled -5 □ Incapacitated □

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Experience:

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Juggler can most often be found haunting the streets of the Lincoln Park area (inside Chicago proper, a risky practice) often attaching himself to late-night revelers, mystifying them with his presence, and then clouding their memories of him as sunrise approaches. Never-the-less, there are stories and tales among certain circles in the area of "The Party Man" who appears suddenly, bedazzles the revelers, and then fades back away into the night. He has little respect for mortals and places little value in their lives. He has been known to maim with barely any provocation when a mortal is involved. Juggler has little patience with those who hinder him.

Like many other Kindred, he speaks little of his history. His English/American dialect is near perfect, but in moments of rage, he is known to lapse into bursts of raw, Neapolitan Italian.

Juggler has a secret identity. He visits Chicago very often and is the leader of the Anarchs there. Because he himself is from Gary, he has much more leeway than the other Anarchs, who are all from Chicago. The primary HQ of this group is in fact in Gary in an abandoned steel mill located in the Wasteland. Juggler has contacts with a number of gangs in the Wasteland and is beginning the process of subjugating their leaders.

Roleplaying Tips: Be dramatic and bold with every action you take. Juggler will be most vivid if you work up a strong rivalry between him and the most dominant and aggressive character among the player characters. Throughout the Chronicle, you can play and expand upon this rivalry, and it can provide new twists to your stories.

Michael

Born: unknown, presumably within the last 20 years, Chicago

Apparent age: late teens

Generation: Eighth

Description: Tall and heavily built, Michael has stringy brown hair worn long, nearly to his shoulder. His eyes are wide and a light, near amber, brown. His teeth are broken and crooked. He walks with a limp on his left side, which gives him a distinct lurching appearance.

Clan: Malkavian

Nature: Child

Demeanor: Child

Notes:

Michael is a truly sad case. Apparently retarded, there is much speculation that he was created as part of some cruel joke, and then abandoned. Miraculously, he has managed to not only survive but attract little or no attention to himself.

He resides in the Telton Cemetery in Gary, where he sleeps within a mausoleum that bears the name Martin Greenman. Michael, when asked, will point to the name and say

VAMPIRE™
Michael

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength Powerful	●●●●●	Charisma	●●●○○	Perception Intuitive	●●●●○
Dexterity	●○○○○	Manipulation	●○○○○	Intelligence	●○○○○
Stamina Stalwart	●●●●○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	●○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Alertness People	●●●●●	Drive	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl	●●●○○	Firearms	○○○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●○○○○	Melee	●●○○○	Law	○○○○○
Empathy	●●○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Intimidation	●○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Leadership	○○○○○	Security	○○○○○	Occult	●○○○○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	●●●○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival	●○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Auspex	●○○○○	Mentor	●○○○○	Conscience	●●●●●
Obfuscate	●●○○○	Herd	●○○○○	Self-Control	●●●○○
Fortitude	●○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●●●
	○○○○○		○○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○		

Other Traits:
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○
○○○○○

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Humanity
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Willpower
● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●
□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool
○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Health
Bruised □
Hurt -1 □
Injured -2 □
Wounded -3 □
Mauled -4 □
Crippled -5 □
Incapacitated □

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

"Daddy." There are no records of the Martin Greenman who is buried there as having anyone in his family named Michael.

Michael is extremely shy and difficult to talk to. He will only reveal himself to another Kindred who has spent at least a few days lurking in the graveyard looking for him, unless he knows the person. Occasionally, Michael attaches himself to Allicia and stays in her care. This rarely lasts for more than a few months before he wanders back to the graveyard and his solitude. He has apparently forged some form of permanent emotional bond with Allicia, however, and has been known to appear when she is emotionally distraught or on edge (she is, in fact, his Regent and he her Thrall).

He is immensely strong, but does not strike to kill, only disable. Additionally, no one in Chicago, not even Allicia, has ever seen him hunt. When asked of it, he simply shrugs. The characters at first may misunderstand Michael, thinking him to be a killer or even a member of the Sabbat. The mistaken identity can last for some time, as long as you need it to.

Roleplaying Tips: Slant your shoulders and move about nervously when you speak, so as to show off the limp. Play up your low intelligence, but make sure you let a certain craftiness and wisdom shine through.

Evelyn Stephens

Born: 1967, Chicago

Apparent age: early twenties

Generation: Ninth

Description: Evelyn Stephens is of average height and light build. She is almond skinned and wears her dark hair styled at shoulder length. Her eyes have become a unique gray-green.

Clan: Brujah

Nature: Bon Vivant

Demeanor: Survivor

Notes:

Evelyn Stephens met Juggler on Christmas Eve in 1983. Somehow, she instinctively knew there was more to this man than his outward appearance and manner implied. She pressed him, cajoled him and eventually enticed him into revealing his secrets to her. The truth unveiled, there was nothing that could stop Evelyn Stephens from becoming a Vampire.

The transformation, however, was more traumatic for her than Juggler had anticipated. He was careless for a moment, and she fled in fear straight to her brother William. Juggler retrieved her, but not before her brother learned the truth.

Evelyn is heady with her power. She rarely thinks her actions through, and is unconvinced that caution is the best

VAMPIRE™

Evelyn Stephens

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception (Intuitive)	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation (Controlling)	●●●●○	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance (Beautiful)	●●●●○	Wits	●●○○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●●●○○
Alertness	●○○○○	Drive	●●○○○	Computer	●●○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Etiquette	●●○○○	Finance	●●○○○
Brawl	○○○○○	Firearms	●●○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●○○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Law	●○○○○
Empathy	●○○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	●○○○○
Intimidation	●●○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	●●●○○
Leadership	●○○○○	Security	○○○○○	Occult	●●○○○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	○○○○○	Politics	●●○○○
Subterfuge (Trick)	●●●○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Celerity	●○○○○	Allies	●●○○○	Conscience	●●●○○
Potence	●○○○○	Contacts	●○○○○	Self-Control	●●○○○
Presence	●●○○○	Resources	●○○○○	Courage	●●●○○
	○○○○○	Herd	●○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○		

Other Traits: ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○

Humanity: ●●●●●●○○○○

Willpower: ●●●●●●●○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

Health: Bruised □ Hurt -1 □ Injured -2 □ Wounded -3 □ Mauled -4 □ Crippled -5 □ Incapacitated □

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Experience:

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

VAMPIRE™
Alexander Danov

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception Attentive	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●●●○○	Intelligence Astute	●●●●●
Stamina	●●●●○	Appearance Nosferatu	○○○○○	Wits Shrewd	●●●●○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	●●●○○	Animal Ken	●●●○○	Bureaucracy	●○○○○
Alertness Body Language	●●●●●	Drive	●○○○○	Computer Programming	●●●●○
Athletics	●●○○○	Etiquette	●●○○○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl	●●○○○	Firearms	●●○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●●●○○	Melee	○○○○○	Law	●○○○○
Empathy	●○○○○	Music	●●●○○	Linguistics	●●●○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Leadership	●●○○○	Security	○○○○○	Occult Golconda	●●●●○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Stealth Pursue	●●●●○	Politics	●○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival Mountains	●●●●○	Science	●●○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Potence	●●●○○	Resources	●●●●○	Conscience	●●●●○
Obfuscate	●●●○○	Retainers	●○○○○		
Animalism	●●●●○	Status	●●○○○	Self-Control	●●●○○
Auspex	●●○○○		○○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●●○

Other Traits:

	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Humanity: ●●●●●●●●●○

Willpower: ●●●●●●●○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt	-1 □
Injured	-2 □
Wounded	-3 □
Mauled	-4 □
Crippled	-5 □
Incapacitated	□

Experience:

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

possible course for one of the Kindred. Juggler, as her Sire, is still responsible for her, but though he is often amused by her actions, his patience is beginning to wear thin.

Modius does not yet know about Evelyn, but when he learns that a Neonate has been created without his permission, his rage will have no bounds. Make sure the characters are present when he finds out — it will be most interesting.

Roleplaying Tips: Be extravagant and bold with your hand and body gestures. Don't let men intimidate you, manipulate them back. Assume that you will get your way, and then make sure that you do.

Alexander Danov

Born: before 1400?; Eastern Europe

Apparent age: early thirties

Generation: Seventh

Description: Tall, with an average build for his height, he has a wide face with deep-set grey eyes. They are the only part of him that is attractive, otherwise he is a hideous looking creature, with coarse, crinkled skin, a twisted, contoured face, and only a few tuffs of hair remaining. He is an exquisite example of a Nosferatu.

Clan: Nosferatu

Nature: Judge

Demeanor Architect

Notes:

Danov does not speak much of his history, but his recollections of his talk with Lucian before the Battle Of Tannenburg in 1410 and his references to his 'youth' at the time point to his Becoming being not long before that. He claims not to know his Sire, but surmises him not to have been very aged, and places himself in the Seventh Generation. Nothing has been witnessed to dispute this.

The name he uses is not his birth name, but one he picked up during his time in Russia during the mid-to-late Nineteenth Century.

Though not formally an Elder himself, Danov is well-known among the Kindred of North America. During the last half-century, he has been moving slowly from city to city on what he calls a "simple search for existence."

Danov himself is searching for Golconda and has come a long way. Though he does not proselytize, he will speak about it if asked. He will help to guide those whom he considers to have the maturity to reach Golconda, and may eventually give them directions on how to reach one of the Inconnu who can take them through Suspire.

Roleplaying Tips: Be very quiet, but extremely watchful. You react to things that happen around you, but in a very understated way — just the smallest smile, or quietest

chuckle. Unless the players are watching you closely, they will not see your reaction. At the start, they should not realize that you are anything but straight faced.

Lucian

Born: before 1 AD, Roman Empire

Apparent age: late forties

Generation: Eighth

Description: Lucian is a tall, powerfully built man. Broad shouldered, he has square, rugged features. His hair is black, speckled with grey, and worn short. He has rich, dark brown eyes and a deep, commanding voice.

Clan: Gangrel

Nature: Traditionalist

Demeanor: Director

Notes:

Lucian is a gruff and sometimes arrogant Vampire, who possesses more than his share of charm. He dislikes speaking of his past, except for the fact that he served under *the* Julius Caesar, and that he slew his own Sire, whom he described as a "vilecreature," sometime around 1100. Though he commands respect, many deride him for his self-admitted Kindred-slaying. He has made many enemies in Chicago, and has great antipathy for the Prince of that city — Lodin.

Lucian has never accepted the Kindred as a group, and strongly objects to Clan-ties as well as to Sects like the Camarilla. He deliberately sets himself apart from other Vampires. He comes from an age where there were few Kindred, and those that existed rarely associated themselves with each other. His hatred of other Elders is perhaps due to his own rather advanced age. Though he is old, his Blood is as diluted as any recently made Vampire

All-in-all, Lucian is a fairly decent individual. He seems to value compassion and mercy above all other concerns. The times he has involved himself with Kindred affairs has been in opposition to cruelty and inhumanity. On those occasions, he has displayed the ability to completely wipe the mind of a person, leaving them a gibbering husk with the mind of child.

He is trusted by Modius, but they are not friends. Lucian still controls the shipyards and the docks, where the international freight ships load and unload materials. Not only is the stevedores' union under his control, but the management of the entire operation is under his sway. He owns the Gary Export Company, which serves as the primary conveyance for Vampires to travel to and from Chicago when traveling across the Atlantic. Thus he knows much of the comings and goings of many of the Elders, though it must be mentioned that such travel is very rare.

VAMPIRE™

Lucian

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength Broad Shoulders	●●●●○	Charisma Charming	●●●●○	Perception Patient	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation Sly	●●●●●	Intelligence Knowledge	●●●●○
Stamina Tireless	●●●●○	Appearance Regal	●●●●○	Wits	●●○○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	●●○○○	Bureaucracy	●●○○○
Alertness	●●●○○	Drive	○○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	●●●○○	Etiquette Small groups	●●●●●	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl Kung-Fu	●●●●○	Firearms Rifles	●●●●●	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●●●○○	Melee Sword	●●●●○	Law Ancient	●●●●○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music	●●●○○	Linguistics Military	●●●●●
Intimidation Threaten	●●●●○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Leadership	●●●○○	Security	○○○○○	Occult Vampires	●●●●●
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	○○○○○	Politics	●●○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival	●○○○○	Science Relativity Theory	●●●●○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Protean	●●●●●	Status	●●●●●	Conscience	●●○○○
Fortitude	●●●●●	Contacts	●●●●●	Self-Control	●●○○○
Animalism	●●●○○	Resources	●●●●○		
Presence	●●●●○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●●●
Dominate	●●●●○		○○○○○		

Other Traits

Potence	●○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Humanity ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Willpower ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

□□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool ○○○○○○○○○○

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt -1	□
Injured -2	□
Wounded -3	□
Mauled -4	□
Crippled -5	□
Incapacitated	□

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

VAMPIRE™

Sullivan Dane

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●○○○○	Perception Curious	●●●●○
Dexterity Cat-like	●●●●○	Manipulation	●●●○○	Intelligence Discerning	●●●●○
Stamina Determined	●●●●○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits Devilishly-Clever	●●●●●

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	●●○○○	Animal Ken	●○○○○	Bureaucracy	●○○○○
Alertness Supernatural	●●●●○	Drive	●●○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics Gymnastics	●●●●○	Etiquette	●●○○○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl Boxing	●●●●○	Firearms Assasination	●●●●○	Investigation Deduction	●●●●●
Dodge Slippery	●●●●○	Melee Fencing	●●●●○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music Viola	●●●●●	Linguistics	●●●○○
Intimidation	○○○○○	Repair	●○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Leadership	○○○○○	Security	●●●○○	Occult Vampires	●●●●○
Streetwise Street Culture	●●●○○	Stealth Darkness	●●●●●	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	○○○○○	Survival	●○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Auspex	●○○○○	Contacts	●●●●●	Conscience	●●○○○
	○○○○○	Resources	●●●○○		
	○○○○○	Status	●○○○○	Self-Control	●●●●●
	○○○○○		○○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●●○

Other Traits:

Faith (8)	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Humanity: ●●●●●●●○○○

Willpower: ●●●●●●●●●● □□□□□□□□□□

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt -1	□
Injured -2	□
Wounded -3	□
Mauled -4	□
Crippled -5	□
Incapacitated	□

Experience

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Roleplaying Tips: Ignore others as much as possible, they bore you. When you do deign to acknowledge them, use your eyes with great effect, staring coldly at those who say foolish things. If the players do not react appropriately to this, tell them his Presence is strong, and they must spend a Willpower if they do not want to turn away.

The Hunters

Here are three different hunter characters for you to weave into your Chronicle. They will act when the characters misstep, so they provide an excellent means to maintain ongoing tension and suspense. They certainly encourage the players to be exceedingly careful. If they are killed, it will only attract more attention to the city, attracting even more hunters. However, an "accident" would not be so obvious.

Sullivan Dane

Born: 1957; Mapperly, Great Britain

Description: Above average height and build, with lean sharp features. His dark, near black hair is usually worn short in a very utilitarian cut. His eyes are thin and dark green. Of distinguishing note, he bears the scars of severe burns across both of his hands and forearms. He usually wears gloves.

Occupation: Former Jesuit brother; witch-hunter

Nature: Loner

Demeanor: Survivor

Faith: 8

Notes:

Dane, from an early childhood, believed in his calling from God. He saw evil as a tangible force in the world and one which had to be confronted if it was to be defeated. He traveled abroad for a few years upon reaching his maturity before becoming an applicant to the Jesuit order in 1980. However, he never completed his studies.

It is believed that during the winter of 1982, he encountered a rouge Caitiff on the night streets of Georgetown, Washington D.C. It is more than likely that Dane interrupted the huntings of a Vampire who, on the edge of her sanity, decided to play with the young novitiate before consuming him. Dane proved smarter than she thought. He escaped her, hunted her for the following weeks, and finally caught her. He learned of her fear of fire and used it against her. She was destroyed utterly and he was scarred by the flames himself. However, now Dane has no fear of the flames.

He left the order less than a year later, unable to convince them of his experience. Clearly, if there was one such servant of evil as he had met and destroyed, there would be others. Saddened, but not angered by the Church's unwillingness to believe him, he set out to perform the Lord's will himself.

However, members of the Inquisition heard of his experience and have made him one of them. They have been able to give him some support, but mostly they have been able to provide him with information as well as a number of contacts in different cities.

Dane is driven, but strongly in control of his faculties. He has learned much of the Kindred and their ways, and since that fateful encountered has been responsible for the deaths of at least six other Kindred. All along, he has sought to prove the existence of Vampires to the Church. He has also been careful about keeping their existence quiet. He understands full well the chaos that might reign were the remainder of the world to learn of them.

He is a quiet, careful hunter. Those he stalks are barely aware of him at the periphery of their consciousness before he strikes. Invariably, he will be working with one or more other individuals he has convinced of his cause. His most common tactic involves flushing his prey into an ambush.

About five years ago he destroyed a father and son Kindred pair in Algeria after a long hunt. It is believed that at the time he had with him at least one active member of the Jesuit order who witnessed the pair's activity and ultimate destruction. There have been strong rumors of physical evidence: remains, photographs, or possibly video tape. Since that incident, there have been an increasing number of rumors that the Holy Office in Rome is embroiled in an internal controversy over the incident and the existence of Kindred.

Dane understands the Kindred and their folklore, but he is a man of the Twentieth Century. His monetary resources are usually poor, unless he is able to find some benefactor, but whenever he can, he uses the weapons and technology of the modern world in his hunt.

He has set up base in Gary. Have him begin following one of the characters, shadowing their every move. At first he only knows about one of them, but gradually he learns more and more about them. The characters should have opportunities to learn they are being followed, but Dane is being very careful, so it will be difficult. Dane may have gotten in contact with the Inquisition since he has reached Chicago, and thus may have significant resources backing him up. Alternatively, the plot of a story could be preventing Dane from getting in contact with the Inquisition.

Roleplaying Tips: Dane is too cautious to ever speak to the characters directly, though he may speak to them on the telephone in order to receive more information.

Special Agent William Shepard

Born: 1958, Detroit

Description: Of slightly above-average height and average build, Shepard wears his midnight black hair short in a trim, near military cut. His eyes are deep blue and almost unnaturally intense. He has a small scar just below his left ear.

Last seen: present day, Chicago

VAMPIRE™

William Shepard

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception (Wary)	●●●●○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation	●●○○○	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●○○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	●○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●●○○○
Alertness	●●●○○	Drive	●●●○○	Computer	●○○○○
Athletics	●○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl	●●●○○	Firearms	●●●○○	Investigation (Kindred)	●●●●○
Dodge	●●○○○	Melee	○○○○○	Law	●●●○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	●○○○○
Intimidation	●●○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Leadership	●●●○○	Security	●●●○○	Occult	●○○○○
Streetwise	○○○○○	Stealth	●●●○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	●○○○○	Survival	●○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
	○○○○○	Allies	●○○○○	Conscience	●●●○○
	○○○○○	Contacts	●○○○○	Self-Control	●●●●○
	○○○○○	Resources	●●●○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●○○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		

Other Traits

Police Procedure	●●●●●
FBI Resources	●●●●○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Humanity ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Willpower ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ □□□□□□□□□□

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt -1	□
Injured -2	□
Wounded -3	□
Mauled -4	□
Crippled -5	□
Incapacitated	□

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Nature: Director

Demeanor: Fanatic

Notes:

Shepard knows. How he knows is unclear, but he knows. He knows that Vampires really exist. He knows they are everywhere, especially in Chicago. He knows they are evil and must be destroyed. What he doesn't know is how to convince others of this truth.

As a member of the FBI based out of Chicago, he is restricted by the Bureau's jurisdictional limitations. Officially, the Bureau can only become involved in a crime if it falls within their jurisdiction: kidnapping, bank robbery, offences involving Federal property or employees, interstate crime, and other related areas. Shepard is eagerly awaiting the day when one of the Kindred steps over that line. Anticipating that day, Shepard will often attempt to involve himself in matters of local jurisdiction and continue to hover nearby until warned off.

Ironically, Shepard is not a member of Special Affairs, nor is he even aware of its existence.

You will want to make Shepard the nemesis of one of the characters, preferably after they have made a major mistake and have in some way exposed themselves. It is best if you do not work him into the Chronicle right away, but do so later. Make sure you do not kill him off if you intend to use our supplement **Ashes to Ashes**, for he appears in it.

If Shepard ever manages to get in touch with Detective Stephens, then sparks will fly. For then, he will have a knowledgeable ally in the local forces who will have the power to call him in.

Roleplaying Tips: Shepard will speak to the characters, but only if he himself is being watched by others. He is very professional in bearing, and will not reveal what he is thinking to those he interviews.

VAMPIRE™ Gregory Stephens

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●●○○	Charisma	●●○○○	Perception	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●○○○	Manipulation	●●●○○	Intelligence	●●○○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance	●●○○○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	○○○○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	○○○○○
Alertness	●●●○○	Drive	●●○○○	Computer	●○○○○
Athletics	○○○○○	Etiquette	○○○○○	Finance	○○○○○
Brawl	●●○○○	Firearms	●●●○○	Investigation Detective	●●●●○
Dodge	●○○○○	Melee	●○○○○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy	○○○○○	Music	○○○○○	Linguistics	○○○○○
Intimidation	●○○○○	Repair	●○○○○	Medicine	○○○○○
Leadership	●○○○○	Security	●●●○○	Occult	●●●○○
Streetwise Rumors	●●●●●	Stealth	●●○○○	Politics	○○○○○
Subterfuge	●○○○○	Survival	○○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
	○○○○○	Resources	●●○○○	Conscience	●●●●○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Self-Control	●●●●○
	○○○○○		○○○○○		
	○○○○○		○○○○○	Courage	●●●●○

Other Traits:

Police Procedure	●●●●○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○
	○○○○○

Humanity: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ●

Willpower: ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ● ○ ○ □□□□□□□□□□

Health

Bruised	□
Hurt -1	□
Injured -2	□
Wounded -3	□
Mauled -4	□
Crippled -5	□
Incapacitated	□

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Experience:

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Detective Gregory Stephens

Born: 1960, Chicago

Description: Stephens is a taller than average man with slightly larger than average build. He is dark-skinned, with a square and craggy face, and close-cut, salt and pepper hair. His eyes are brown, though the right is slightly darker than the left.

Nature: Cavalier

Demeanor: Caretaker

Notes:

Stephens is a Detective with the Chicago Police Department, homicide division. He is a careful, cautious man who is knowledgeable in the ways of the police and Chicago politics. He joined the force in 1980, but he was after a job and

held no special desire to uphold law and order. His time on the force has matured him into the hard working, compassionate detective that he is.

He is intimately aware of the Kindred. In 1983, Juggler Sired Stephens' sister Evelyn, at her request. In the first few days of her transformation, Juggler was careless and she fled to her brother out of fear. He has known of her condition since then, and is tom tremendously by it. In many ways he fears her, and those in the city like her. He loves her dearly, and pities her for the horror that she has become. At the same time, there is something disquietingly attractive about her condition.

For the last few years, he has been doing everything in his power to find a way to "cure" his sister. He has made contacts with all sorts of fanatical organizations, and has even followed his sister on occasion to find out more about the other Vampires. He knows more than any other mortal in the Chicago area about the Undead. If need be, he will kill to protect his sister, or to rescue her from her fate.

Out of concern for his sister, Stephens has occasionally helped various Kindred within the city. He has also been known to work against them when his conscience demands it. He hates Juggler and has even argued with him on occasion. The only thing that has stayed the Vampire's hand is an edict by Lodin protecting all members of Chicago's law enforcement community. That has not stopped Juggler from severely injuring him on at least one occasion.

If he is ever killed in the line of duty, his will stipulates that a letter in a safety-deposit box be delivered to one of the Police Commissioners, one of Stephens' classmates from the Police Academy. The letter reveals everything that he has learned in the past few years.

Roleplaying Tips: Play the hard-boiled detective to the hilt, but don't bother to make him emotionless — Greg involves himself emotionally in everything he does. However, he is very intelligent and crafty, and will use every resource to his best advantage.

Came the last night of sadness,
And it was clear she couldn't go on.
Then the door was open and the wind appeared.
The candles blew and then disappeared,
The curtains flew and then he appeared.
Come on baby, and she had no fear.
And she ran to him, then they started to fly,
They looked backward and said goodbye.
She had become like they are,
She had taken his hand.
She had become like they are,
Don't fear the reaper.

— Blue Oyster Cult, *Don't Fear the Reaper*

Ventrue (ven' - tro͞o)

Chapter Nine: Storytelling

The hero has died as a modern man; but as eternal man — universal man — he has been reborn.

— Joseph Campbell

Running a **Vampire** game session is not always easy, but it can be completely engaging. Though being a player has its rewards, there is something about being a Storyteller that pushes the experience to an entirely different level. It has something to do with the fact that, as a Storyteller, you are creating an entire world out of your imagination, conjuring it out of thin air. In some small but significant way, you play the role of a god — in the same way that a poet, novelist or inventor does. You are a creator of a universe, and that role supplies its own rarified reward.

If you aren't ready for it, being a Storyteller can be a disaster. Besides roleplaying all the characters that the players don't play, you've got to wear about six other hats: stage manger, director, props coordinator, social director, script writer and even publicist. However, you shouldn't let your fear of something new keep you from trying it out. You'll be nervous, afraid of your players' reactions and far too cautious, but after trying it just once, you'll discover that it's not really that hard. For your first story, however, the best idea is to use one of While Wolf's prewritten stories — it will give you the basics of what to do and will lead you step by step through the process.

Contents

This chapter attempts to describe the course of the story in detail. It is not intended to be an all-inclusive description of the stories you can tell in **Vampire** — that would be impossible in this limited a space (it would take an encyclopedia). We will try to get at what we believe to be the most archetypical of the **Vampire** stories though. Much of this chapter is a practical demonstration of how the ebb and flow of the game can function, and how change and evolution is an essential element of a good story. We hope that you find it useful.

First we will describe some of the nuances of being a Storyteller, then we will discuss Live-Action roleplaying. Finally, we will discuss how to create and tell good stories. The last part of the chapter is an example story, **Baptism by Fire**, that ties in with the example Chronicle, **Forged in Steel**. All the information here is intended to be in the form of advice. Use what you want, and throw away everything that doesn't fit your Storytelling style.

We've tried to include every useful piece of advice and wisdom that we could to make the job of Storyteller that much easier, and to help you understand what is required in as simple terms as possible. Even if you have done this sort of thing before, you will still find this chapter to be of interest, for it describes what **Vampire** requires in particular.

The Storyteller

I stood,
Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
Of thoughts which were not their thoughts.

— Lord Byron, *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*

The role of the Storyteller is a most challenging and rewarding role in **Vampire**. However, most of this book is dedicated to the players and their characters. There are a few mentions of the Storyteller — what little there is are announcements that the Storyteller will know how to take care of various problems. This section is to help explain to you what a Storyteller does and how to do it. If you've done this kind of thing before, you can skip this section if you wish, but if you've never done this type of thing before and you are thinking of taking the role of the Storyteller, you may find the next few paragraphs useful, or at least encouraging.

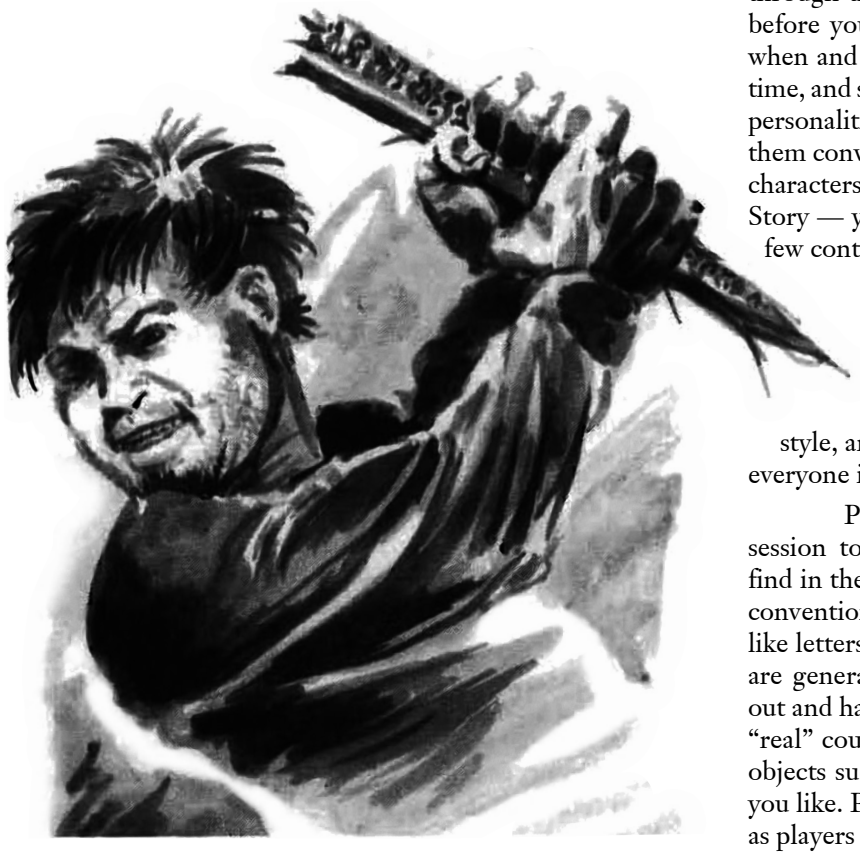
A Job Description

The players have it easy. They only have to worry about one character, one single alter-ego. As the Storyteller, your job is a bit more demanding. You must roleplay every character in the story who is not controlled by a player. If you think of the story as a movie, the players have the starring cast and you control all the supporting cast, walk-ons and extras. Such characters are sometimes called non-player characters, or NPCs.

As the Storyteller, you are the rest of the universe. Apart from playing all the non-player characters in the story, you also have charge of the story itself. This may be a published story (you'll find a list of planned supplements for **Vampire** at the back of this book), or it may be something you've made up yourself. The players will start off knowing nothing of the story they are experiencing, and will learn about it as they go along. You, on the other hand, must know everything right from the start. If the characters decide to turn down a certain alley, or enter a certain building, you must know what they will find. You are their eyes and ears. If they deal with an antagonist in an insulting manner, you must decide how she will react. You have to keep an eye on how the story is progressing and make sure that all of the players are having a good time.

Finally, the Storyteller has final responsibility for the rules as they are applied during the game. If any questions or disputes arise during play about any of the rules, you have the final decision. Even though we've designed these rules as carefully as we can and tested them thoroughly, the nature of Storytelling games is such that situations always arise which are not covered by the letter of the rules. Part of the Storyteller's job is to resolve these situations, sticking to the *spirit* of the rules as much as possible.

Sound daunting? Well, it needn't be. In fact, once you get the hang of it, the role of Storyteller can be at least as rewarding as that of a player. There are many who would never go back to being players.



Bestial hatred and misplaced satisfaction erupt as he plunges wooden death into his creator and tormentor.

Running the Game

When a Storyteller directs the players through the story, she is said to be "running the game." The Storyteller is in charge, and must take the lead in order to keep the story moving briskly in the desired direction, or at least stop it from breaking down totally if the players and their characters head off in the completely wrong direction. The Storyteller must make sure the game element doesn't slow down or interfere with the story element.

The single most important thing when telling a story is to be familiar with it. This may sound obvious, but it can't be stressed enough. If you are using a premade story, read through the text of the story very thoroughly at least once before you present it to the players. Make sure you know when and where everything happens, who is where at what time, and so on. Especially, study the major antagonists, their personalities and motivations, and be sure that you can present them convincingly to the players. Try to anticipate what the characters will do and how this will affect the course of the Story — you can't foresee everything, of course, but have a few contingency plans worked out in advance.

Props

Props are very much a matter of personal taste. Each gaming group has its own preferred style, and there's no right way or wrong way — as long as everyone is having a good time, you're doing just fine.

Props are real objects that are used in the game session to represent similar objects which the characters find in the game. The most common examples are what are conventionally called "player handouts." These are things like letters, pictures, scrawled maps and other objects which are generally included in a published adventure, to be cut out and handed to the players when their characters find the "real" counterpart in the story. Other things might include objects such as cloaks, silver-topped canes or anything else you like. Props can add to the reality of the story quite a bit, as players present not only the speech but also the actions of their characters. Props are most often used during Live-Action roleplaying, but are useful any time.

Rules

The core rules of **Vampire** have been specially designed so that they are simple yet flexible. Simple, so that the basic principles of the rules can be grasped very easily even by someone who has never played this type of game before. Flexible, so that they can cover most if not all of the infinite possibilities presented by a Storytelling game, and provide a reasonable and credible resolution system under most circumstances.

It is up to you to present the rules to the players in such a way that they easily understand how they function, yet are able to use them flexibly enough to provide for realistic and dramatic scenes and encounters.

As a Storyteller, you will quickly come to develop your own personal style. Part of this will arise from your own personality and inclinations, and part of it will reflect the tastes of your players. The range of different styles is best illustrated by reference to two archetypes, representing the opposite ends of the scale. Both are exaggerated, and you will probably end up somewhere in between.

At one end of the scale is the Rules Lawyer. This type of Storyteller insists on dice rolls for everything, and applies the letter of the rules to the fullest extent. If a character is sitting on a chair, the Rules Lawyer might ask the player to roll Dexterity to avoid falling off. There is a knock at the door, roll Perception to see if you hear it. The character rises to answer the door, but must first roll Dexterity to stand up successfully, Perception to find the door, and Dexterity again to get it open. Ridiculous, of course, but it demonstrates how extreme it can get.

At the other end of the scale is the Freeformer. To this type of Storyteller, the story is everything. Dice are rolled only occasionally, and then only for the nice sound they make. In fact, the Storyteller decides without dice exactly what is going to happen, and is guiding the players through it just as though they were reading a book. Character actions may direct the story, but it is the Storyteller who decides the results of the actions.

Vampire as a game tends to be more freeform than rules-oriented. The rules are there to help, not to govern, but the players should have the maximum freedom of action, and *never* feel that their decisions and actions do not make a difference.

Breaking the Rules

One of the biggest decisions a Storyteller will ever make comes when he first decides to ignore the rules. This is perfectly legitimate, provided it's done for the right reasons.

From time to time, situations will arise where applying the full letter of the rules would cause the entire story to collapse. For example, the characters have just spent several weeks finding and recovering an ancient tome, which will give them vital information about the Sabbat who have entered the city. Without the information in this tome, the characters will stand no chance at all of surviving an encounter with the Black Hand, who have become alerted to the characters' existence and intentions, and will react soon.

A freak botch sends the character carrying the tome falling from a rooftop into a huge fire. It is the result of a mortal Vampire-hunter trying to destroy the characters, though he knows nothing of their mission. The tome is lost forever, the characters are doomed to die at the hands of the Sabbat, the city cannot be saved, and the whole Chronicle comes to an end.

As well as being a crushing and probably undeserved defeat for the characters, this single bad roll means that the story cannot proceed. That can be very frustrating if you've spent your hard-earned cash on buying it or devoted several weeks of spare time to designing it. A couple different repairs are possible, though, so don't despair.

One is to discount the botch — reduce its severity so that the book is saved, or simply have the player repeat the roll. This works fine, but you may find players relying on this kind of aid from you every time they get themselves into trouble. Best not to get them into bad habits if you can avoid it.

Another option is to amend the story. The book is lost, but somewhere there is another source of information which can replace it. Perhaps one of the Sabbat is sickened by the excesses of his fellows, or moved by ambition or revenge to turn against them. He seeks out the characters and arms them with the knowledge they need. Again, this will work, but you may find players blatantly sitting around, waiting for you to spoon-feed them in future situations.

Thirdly, you might allow the falling character a superhuman (or super-Vampiric) effort to throw the book to one of his comrades so that the story can continue. This is probably the best option for most Chronicles, but it may not work for you.

There are other ways out of this situation as well; your job, and privilege, is to decide which means you will use.

Other Problems

As well as being a referee, gamemaster, roleplayer, overseer and making sure the story moves along well, the Storyteller has one other duty — to make sure the players have fun. The Storyteller must be an entertainer. For the most part, this will consist of knowing your players and catering to their tastes so far as challenges and plotlines go, but there is a chance that at some time or another you will be faced with a problem arising from one or more players themselves.

Do's and Don'ts

Being a Storyteller is as much a challenge and a delight as being a gamemaster in most other roleplaying games. There are some specific things to keep in mind however when you run **Vampire**.

Do's

• Keep all the characters in mind. Provide something for everyone to do, no matter what the Scene. Even if one Character is the one on whom everything rests, cut off your roleplaying with that player after a bit and do something with the other players. It may not make any difference to the plot, but it will let everyone have some fun, keep them from being bored, and will make them a part of the Scene. Let every player have an equal chance to do something, to take an action or interact with one of your characters. Though you may naturally give more time to the more creative and inventive roleplayers in your group, never ignore someone else.

• Go beyond the rules. The rules are for keeping characters in line. If your imagination is superior to the rules, then go beyond the rules. Especially for non-player Vampire powers, you should let your imagination roam free. There are Werewolves and Wizards and even Ghosts in this world, yet in this game they are not carefully detailed. You'll have to make up their powers on your own. You may make them as mysterious and enigmatic as you desire. Future products in the Storyteller™ series will detail these beings more completely.

• Encourage the players to roleplay among themselves. You want to see real and vivid interaction between the players. If they don't roleplay unless they're talking to you, you know something is wrong.

• Take Breaks. Sometimes you're going to need to take a break. To stand back from the action and take a look at where the story is going and where it's at. At such times, simply stand back from the table and take a short walk, or open this book and pretend you are reading. Don't feel embarrassed about this; everyone needs these rests. The players get them all the time, but the Storyteller almost never does. It's almost impossible to sustain a high level of dynamic storytelling without breaks. A good idea is to start the players roleplaying with one another before you rest, since this ensures that they aren't bored while you're not involved.

• Encourage Player Input. Don't run the game without being aware of what your players like and don't like. Balance the desire of the players to achieve the objectives of their characters with their desire to roleplay — let them accomplish their goals without breaking character.

Don'ts

The following are things which you should never do:

• Don't take away the characters' free will. Players are invariably protective of what they consider to be the free will of their characters. They want real choices, and the freedom to choose their characters' actions. While they need to feel that if they do something stupid they will be punished, you don't want them to feel that, if they think of something smart, you will punish them, because it wasn't what you had anticipated.

• Don't force the characters into a pre-determined plot. In **Vampire**, more so than in other games, the characters need to be self-motivated. You cannot simply stick them into your story. You have to weave the story around them and let them become involved in it at their own pace. Often this means you must create the story as you go, making up each Scene and doing a great deal of impromptu roleplaying. It is difficult, but fulfilling.

• Don't let luck rule the plot. Characters should get to win on the basis of their own skill and ingenuity, not on unrelated dice rolls. Try to give the players every chance to have the experience and Abilities of their characters make the difference. Automatic successes are an excellent way to emphasize how important their ratings are.

• Don't cater to stereotypes. Though you will use stereotypes regularly, you should always try to twist or change them. Stereotypes are excellent tools for the Storyteller, since they allow you to quickly get across a character or a situation. Put a stereotype into a story, play it like a stereotype for most of the story (outraging the players in the process), and then, near the conclusion, suddenly flip everything upside down by breaking apart the stereotype. As an extreme example, the evil snarling villain can turn out to be a simple-minded Nosferatu as terrified of the characters as they are of him. It can be very effective and pleasantly educational.

• Don't ignore the characters' Traits. It is important to be be aware of the characters' Traits, especially those flaws which the players so often "forget" such as Derangements. Some Traits that you are not aware of can sometimes become relevant to the story and make your planed resolution inconsistent or unrealistic. It is vital you have a good grasp of who and what the characters are.

For instance, you might spring a trap on the characters, roll the damage dice, and start describing wounds, only to have one of the players say, "My character has Premonitions, I get to roll to see if he sensed danger." Even if he misses the roll, it ruins the momentum you had established and damages the story that you were weaving. Look over the characters before the game and make notes of things you should remember.

In the excitement of the game, especially when things are getting tense, there is a possibility for even the most mild-mannered of players to become agitated, start shouting and perhaps drown out the others. You may find that players with strong personalities are dominating the quieter ones, and in extreme cases the loudest player in the group may end up running the entire party of characters. This, obviously, is undesirable, and players who feel themselves to be overshadowed or ignored will become bored or resentful, and won't enjoy things as much as they should.

Take care to listen to all of your players equally. If one player states that another player's character is doing something, check with that character's player first. If one or more players are dominating the action and not letting the others participate as fully as their characters deserve, take them aside and point out the difficulty as diplomatically as possible. Ask everyone to co-operate and remind them that this is not a competitive game, and those players who seek to dominate others are gaining nothing but unpopularity. As the final sanction, you may decide not to invite an unrepentantly troublesome player to future games.

The Art of Storytelling

The secret thoughts of man run over all things, holy, profane, clean, obscene, grave and light without shame or blame.

— Thomas Hobbes

An important part of your job as the Storyteller is encouraging the players to roleplay and providing them with opportunities to do so. Players need to get into their characters, but this only happens if they feel comfortable and familiar with them. Your roleplaying of the bit parts will be the primary means of getting the players to roleplay. The better you do, the more they will roleplay and the more they will get into the story. But that is not the only way to encourage roleplaying.

One of the reasons people are attracted to roleplaying in the first place is because they are able to employ and see the results of the active use of their free will. They decide to do something and almost immediately they get results, unlike the real world where sometimes you feel that you are one very small clog in a very large machine. You need to be aware of this, and show your players that free will plays a role in your Chronicle.

You'll want to make your stories as open ended as possible, with as many different ways to get to the conclusion (of which there might be many) as there are ways to drive home from work. There might be many quick ways to get through the story, but how often is a story a race to the finish line?

Most of our published supplements are far more linear that you will want to make your own. Though we try to allow as much room for character decisions, the nature of the beast (that being a book of limited size) prohibits us from delineating a variety of different conclusions and plots. This is a weakness you will not want to repeat in your own stories, and even when you do use a supplement, let the players go off the track a little bit and explore their own alternative to the basic plot.

Why Players Play

There are a variety of other reasons why people roleplay and enjoy playing Storytelling games. Understanding each of your players' motivations will enable you to know better what to include in your story to best entertain them. Listed below are some of the more common reasons why people spend their time doing this sort of thing.

• To tell a story — A story can be a beautiful creation, something worthy of the human imagination. Telling stories can be an invigorating and illuminating experience.

• To be yourself, only better—Some people strive not to be someone else, but to be themselves with special powers. There is no other roleplaying experience he wants other than to play a special version of themselves.

• To be someone completely different — Like a kid playing dress-up, putting on a new role and trying it out, you get to see what it is like. Thereby, you can have experiences normally closed to you.

• Problem Solving — Many people enjoy being faced with puzzles, riddles and all manner of mental problems. They enjoy both the process of deducing the solution as well as the elation of the achievement. You will need to include problems in your story to give this kind of player something to solve.

• Sense of Accomplishment — The player simply enjoys the satisfying feeling of completing a difficult task by stretching all of his creative faculties.

• To gain power — We are all too familiar with this goal, the desire for power which one cannot obtain in real life. People who possess this motivation too strongly are called "power-gamers." Fulfilling this need too often can be self-destructive to the character and the campaign.

• To be with friends—People often roleplay because it is a social occasion, a chance for them to be with their friends in a relaxed atmosphere. Sometimes they come just to be with one particular friend (such as a girlfriend or boyfriend).

• To experience strong emotions — Fear, hate, grief and other emotions might be in short supply in a comfy world, but you can get them through roleplaying.

• Catharsis—Our lives in these modern times are often very stress filled, and every once in a while we need a way to blow off some steam. Roleplaying does this by allowing someone to rid themselves of a lot of negative feeling while in the role of another person.

Suspense

Fear is more than simply essential in horror, it is quintessential. Fear is the emotion you want to be coursing through every player's heart for much of the story. Fear is best created through suspense. Suspense, however, is more than simply fear, it can do many things for your story.

Suspense is a major element of **Vampire**, and it is one of the things which differentiates **Vampire** from other horror games. This is not splatterpunk or slasher horror, it is suspense in the Hitchcock tradition. The players should never be sure of what will happen next. They play characters who have been thrust into a world of fantastic proportions and kaleidoscopic reality, and are trapped in a situation which is carnival-like in its strangeness. They have become Vampires. Can you think of anything more strange?

At first, they are not sure what is happening, and when they find out, they must find ways to adjust. It will take an enormous amount of effort just to discover the most elementary facts about the new world they have been thrust into, like discovering what exactly is a Prince. The whole Chronicle might well be an on going process of discovering more and more about the world of **Vampire.**

Alfred Hitchcock was a master of taking ordinary people and putting them into extraordinary situations. The progress of the movie was measured by the approach of this ordinary person toward the truth, the awful truth. The unbearable suspense he created was far more unnerving than anything you can find today, for he concentrated not on the horror or the blood, but on the suspense itself. That is what **Vampire** is about as well.

The suspense in **Vampire** is energized by the fear that plagues the lives of the characters. Though the characters are immensely powerful, they have great weaknesses, and if the characters are discovered, all mortals would rally for their destruction. The threat that the sleeping giant of society poses is real, and from it there is no escape.

Below are some techniques for creating and sustaining suspense.

At her age, pain is unknowable, but a wild fear unknown for millenia surges through her. If only she could move...

• **Description** Give them a staggeringly complete description of what they see, including the sweat on their nose. The pace at which you describe things and the length of time it takes you, as well as what you are actually describing, will serve to build the tension. Thus, you can lavishly detail the exterior of an old, rotting mansion before the players attempt to break into it. The time you spend and the words you use can slowly build up a feeling of anticipation and dread. There are many ways to use description that aren't quite so stereotypical.

• **Imagination:** Sometimes, the opposite is equally effective — if you don't describe something, then you let the players' imaginations go wild. It is the ancient Chinese ideal of the emptiness, of the vacuum — used in music, art, and all aspects of life — in which the blank slate is filled with the imagination. You want to direct their imaginations in certain directions, but you do not want to tell them what to imagine. For instance, you can have one of the characters' retainers, who is guarding over them while they sleep in an abandoned cellar, simply disappear without clues as to her disappearance. It's guaranteed that this will drive them nuts.

• **Timing:** Timing is one of the most important elements in building and sustaining suspense. Timing, however, is something so personal and subtle that it is impossible to teach. You've got to already have it, or somehow learn it if you want to build the effects that create a great story. In a general sense, timing usually means that you start with mystery and drama, and slowly build into, "Bang!," the real horror. Things move slowly during investigations, but much more quickly when the real actions starts — mimicking real life. Gun battles often take only a few seconds. The game system described in the Drama chapter takes this into account, playing out some dramatic moments and shortening others.

Pace events quickly enough that the players feel that they are actually in the moment, and don't have the freedom to dawdle all day. Whenever the players spend far too much time deciding what to do, create an event that interrupts their discussion. Let the action come to them if they don't go to it. Don't let the story stall just because the characters can't decide what they want to do (though be careful that you don't take away their free will either — it's a delicate balance). Create a sense of the real flow of time, but be careful you don't push them too much.

• **Changes of Pace:** Altering the pace of the story is an interesting technique, but one that is often difficult to employ. Don't make the players face horrifying situations every single moment of every single game session. Horror doesn't work that way. The horror will be all the more terrible after they've had a little break from it (the technique of contrast cannot be underrated).

Keep the suspense constant when you want the players to be on the edge of their seats, but make sure you manufacture moments where they can relax and sit back—then bring on even more suspense later on. Make sure that somehow it serves as a potent contrast to what is coming ahead — the eye of the hurricane, so to speak. The way in which you build and relieve tension, and the sharpness of your timing, are basic to the drama of your story. Tension is the one thing you should always have absolute command over. Be aware of it in your players.

Change of pace can often be achieved by switching between mortal and immortal opponents for the characters. At one moment they are opposed merely with a petty hindrance, the next moment they must face a power even greater than their own.

• **Deadline:** Give the characters a deadline. If they don't do such and such by such and such a time, then this (something really, really bad) happens. The players are aware of the deadline, and usually become frantic near the end of their attempt to complete the mission. Of course, you may need to manipulate things so that the mission still needs to be completed as the deadline approaches, so the deadline technique will not be ruined by overly successful players. If they do well enough however, you may want to simply let them win to allow the continuity and reality of the story to continue. This is one of the best ways to build suspense in a story — it rises up in a powerful climax.

• **Delay Success:** Because of the structure of the rules system, partial or marginal successes are common, and often complete success in an action will require several turns to complete. Therefore, you can plan dramatic scenes in which a character's friends must hold off the hoard of enemies while he struggles over a number of turns to repair a malfunctioning vehicle or disable a bomb. Equally dramatic could be a race across a railroad bridge, where you need 18 successes to get all the way across. The fewer turns it takes you, the fewer chances the your opponents will have to shoot you as you run across.

• **Secrecy** There are many elements of the story that must be kept secret from the players. When you use this technique, you try to heighten the importance of these elements (so that players really want to find out the truth) and you try to establish even more secrets. In short, the idea is to populate the story with so many secrets that the characters are surrounded by them. The story will be a great deal more fun if they do not realize what is going on, but must deduce the truth behind everything (problem solvers love this sort of thing). Never tell the players directly what is going on, not even after the story is finished. Mystery is essential to **Vampire**. Without it, there is no real sense of conflict. This mystery adds that extra layer of detail that transforms the game into an engaging way to tell stories. Always keep them guessing.

• **Intrigue:** Plotting and intrigue are essential parts of life among Vampires, and it is a constant element in their strange society. There are mysteries within mysteries within mysteries, and most of it is the Antediluvians plotting against one another. Many of your stories should contain some aspect of intrigue. The characters should try to figure out what is going on as they pursue their goals. They should be constantly confronted and confused by this intrigue. Their lives can be twisted and manipulated, their sanity damaged,

and their safety impinged. Eventually, they should be given the chance to figure out what is going on, but not until the tension and suspense have gotten very thick.

• **Safe Haven:** The best way to keep the players scared is to make sure they never feel completely safe. Simply never give the players a safe Haven or a home to retreat to. Or better yet, give them a place where they can feel secure, a place which they can call home. Over time, get them to place more and more trust in it, so that they believe deep down inside that nothing can happen to them while they are there. Then trick them somehow so that they invite the danger in (it has to be their mistake). Don't destroy this safe Haven through physical danger, do it more psychologically.

• **Scope:** Starting small and then slowly getting big, or alternatively starting big and then slowly getting more and more detailed and involved is a very effective storytelling tool. By changing the scope in your stories, you can create an unfolding panorama before the eyes of the players. One of the best examples of this technique is in Star Wars™, where the big is the size of the death star, beside which the human drama of the story seems very insignificant, at least at first.

Dependents: Encourage the characters to develop friendships with mortals, and make it so they take care of them and learn to appreciate them. This gives them a chance to gain back some Humanity. However, once the players develop an affection for these unique personalities (you've got to roleplay them well), you can start to kill them off, one by one. Nothing makes a player as mad and as scared at the same time. A really fun thing to do is to make a dependent a long term part of the story and then only at the end reveal them as a villain. However, a word of warning, don't create a dependent and make them a villain whenever it suits you. Players will catch on and will think less of the Chronicle when they find out. You've got to be very subtle about how you go about this, putting in hints and clues that the players only pick up on after the fact.

Advanced Storytelling

Below are a number of special techniques you can use to create special effects in your stories. You need experienced players, who are as focused on high quality roleplaying as they are good at it, to even consider using any of these techniques. As the Storyteller, you should have at least some experience under your belt before you try any of the following. These techniques are extremely difficult to play properly and they must be carefully planned and executed with grace and finesse to work effectively. If you can do it right however, you will have created a story your players will never forget.

Flashbacks: Flashbacks are a way to roleplay out scenes in a character's past, as a way of orienting new focus on the current story. The flashback is a second story which is told alongside the basic story about the characters. You can either tell the second story, or you can have the players create characters and roleplay through it. You design a second story which will be played alternatively with the current **Vampire** story, as a type of interlude between the major scenes. However, though the stories may be unconnected by time and space, they must be connected in theme, mood or subject. Each story must somehow illuminate the other. The best way to do this is to have something happen in the second story that somehow reflects back upon the original story.

A flashback could be a short story concerning the early childhood (mortal) of one of the characters. The player of that character plays himself, another player is his best friend, another is his sister, or perhaps his mother or father. In the original story, they are searching for that character's Sire, and thus may be confused by why you are having them play out a flashback. But soon they realize that the Sire is in the flashback as well, and is watching the character. You can reveal clues about the Sire, and make him a more real character by having him be a part of the child's early life. Anything the characters learn can be explained by the fact that the character has suddenly 'remembered' that portion of his childhood, so long forgotten. The players might have so much fun with the flashback that they'll want to play it out as a Chronicle in its own right.

Parallel Story: A parallel story, much like the flashback, is played out as a second story, alongside the first. However, the second story is taking place at the same time as the original story. Thus, the two stories could start out separate and seemingly unconnected, but eventually they can connect with one another.

It could concern a family on vacation driving through the mountains, a group of high school students whose car breaks down and they sleep overnight in an old abandoned mansion, or even a group of Sabbat Vampires weaving a plot to kill the player characters. Just have the players make up the secondary characters at the start of the story, and then switch off from story to story the whole game session, always going to the other story after a cliffhanger.

You won't want to conclude the parallel story until near the end of the game session — delay having the high school students meet their fate until the primary characters are about to walk into the house themselves, only it's not abandoned anymore. Somehow the parallel story has to focus on the central story, adding to its theme and power.

Foreshadowing: By using the Vampire Discipline of Auspex as a rationalization, you can foreshadow the future. Make up a little playlets and act them out for the players, perhaps having one or two of them help you out. If you have time write up a script, photocopy it ahead of time so it can be even more dramatic. To do foreshadowing right is very difficult, but it can have great effect. The simplest way to use it is to describe something really nasty — the players will get so worried about what is ahead that they may inadvertently lead themselves into it.

Dream Sequence: Have the players roleplay through a dream of one of the characters, or perhaps of their major antagonist. The players don't necessarily need to know whose dream they are in. This can be done in the same way you acted out the parallel story or flashback. There are many reasons why you want to roleplay out dreams, but chief among them is the opportunity to get the players to focus on the essential personalities of their characters. The dream world has very different rules and laws from the real world. Nothing quite makes sense or has any solid reality. Yet the images and themes of the conflict found inside the dreams are important.

In a dream sequence, you can have the characters play out the greatest failure they have encountered — over and over again until they succeed. Or you can have them search for the "Talisman," an object which does not really exist, as a way to get them to focus on and decide what they are truly looking for in the real world.

Characters with high Auspex may be capable of entering the dreams of other characters, so in this way they might be able to enter the demented, mad worlds of their worst enemies. Imagine being trapped in the mind of a madman! Dreams become very important in the quest for Golconda, and the final ritual known as Suspire involves a great dream dance that requires the extraordinary from the character.

Symbolism: Having something actually represent something else is an ancient literary technique, and it's amazing how great an influence it can have on a story. In horror especially, symbolism is an effective tool. Monsters, like Vampires, are often symbols for human fears. Try to figure out what concerns the players personally. What are their fears, needs and loves? Then, represent these symbolically in the story. This almost always makes for an overpowering experience in a story, sometimes unpleasantly so. However, if done right, it can help create the very best stories possible.

Much of **Vampire** is already heavily symbolic, so you can simply emphasize that aspect of the game. These symbols tie into the universal myths of humanity and directly correspond with the issues we must face every day. This is what gives them their power. As you read these symbols, keep in mind that what follows is only one interpretation of what they could mean.

• Blood is symbolic of the living food we humans must eat in order to survive, and the life which we must extinguish so that we may live. This is in turn symbolic of the cycle of life, in which that which is dead comes to life but then must eventually return to death.

• The immortality of a Vampire is symbolic of our mortal desire to live forever, yet of the impossibility of our doing so and remaining human. The Vampire existence is cold and unfeeling, a dull imitation of real life. It is a symbol of desire; of tragically misdirected desire.

• The Anarchs represent the disenfranchised youth of a modern civilization that has forgotten them. In the absence of rituals and the wise guidance of Elders, they must seek their own paths through the chaos of life. They create tribes because they were given nothing to belong to. They create mythology for they were given nothing in which to believe. They create war for they have been given nothing worthwhile to strive for.

• The Elders are symbolic of the conservative establishment, of the dulling forces of civilization who keep a lid on the overboiling pot of culture. As in the real world, they are both villains and heros. The Elders are, in short, the old world conflicting with the modern world, fighting desperately to keep a hold on something solid, traditional — a struggle that takes place every day in our society.

• The Sire is symbolic of the Mother and Father, and the conflicts all children have with their parents. If you buy the concept of an Oedipal or Electra Complex, or just want to play with the idea, then you can do highly intriguing things with this symbol. Diablerie will inevitably interfere with a peaceful relationship between Sire and Neonate. Because Vampires do not die to leave room for the young and to pass on the torch, sometimes the young must make room.

• The Beast is symbolic of the dark side of the human spirit, the shadow (Jung's word for the suppressed darker half).

His job is not yet completec

It is the animal instincts and emotions that can overwhelm the most complacent and self-controlled among us. We are not as far from the animal as we would sometimes like to think.

• Humanity represents our higher aspirations, the things we know that we can become, and our brighter and better half. Humanity represents the lofty heights of justice, peace, mercy and compassion that the best of us constantly strive to reach, but none of us ever achieve. We all have some Humanity in us, but some of us work harder to nurture it in ourselves than others.

Live-Action

Living in the limelight, the universal dream,
For those who wish to seem, those who wish to be,
Must put aside the alienation, get on with the fascination,
The real relation, the underlying theme.

— Rush, *Limelight*

Live-Action roleplaying is one of the more dynamic and innovative aspects of **Vampire.** It is central to the way **Vampire** stories are told. Live-Action roleplaying is similar to improvisational theater, where the actors (the characters) act through the Scenes created and introduced by the Storyteller. This makes a much more intense and immediate roleplaying experience.

Torch in hand, Kyle prepares to cleanse the world of a long endured sore.

Usually in roleplaying, the players describe what their characters do, and even say — but in Live-Action roleplaying, you do what your character does and say what your character says (within limits). You can stand up, walk around, hold up a letter, shake hands or rush to a window to see what is going on. Of course, the imagination still needs to be employed, and the Storyteller may still interrupt the action to describe objects and special situations.

Normally during Live-Action, no dice are rolled. Instead, everything is roleplayed. Dice are a prop you just won't need. Your new props will be candles, capes and canes. The Storyteller simply decides how the other characters react to you, and how well you manage to perform certain mechanical actions such as picking a lock, based on a general idea of your character's Traits.

Often, you will want to have a First Mate, someone to help roleplay the non-player characters. Because Live-Action is so direct and immediate, it can be hard for the Storyteller to switch roles. The First Mate option means that you won't have to switch as often. Live-Action offers many opportunities for roleplaying that will be greatly improved if two people can interact with each other as non-player characters (try talking to yourself when playing two roles — it isn't easy). This dynamic interaction lets those characters be seen as separate individuals, rather than as variations of a single voice.

The First Mate must be familiar with the story to keep from making mistakes while ad-libbing a character's actions. A First Mate can be a player whose character is no longer a part of the Coterie, or a friend of the Storyteller brought in just for this chapter, or a member of the troupe for whom it is a permanent position.

For a particularly important Live-Action scene, you will sometimes want to have a number of First Mates assisting, to play all of the other characters who are involved in the scene. At times, you may have more First Mates than actual players — which makes for an exquisite gaming session.

When you choose characters to play for yourself or your First Mates, try to arrange it so that you and they are playing characters that suit your respective gaming styles and tastes. For instance, if a First Mate is good at roleplaying pompous buffoons, make up a character that lets them show off their skills. The Storyteller should usually play the most powerful, central character, so that you can easily affect the tempo of the game and redirect the plot when it needs shifting.

Rules

There are a few basic rules which you **must** follow to make sure that the roleplaying progresses smoothly and safely

in Live-Action. These must be followed if you intend to do any Live-Action at all. Safety must always be a primary concern.

• A player may never actually strike or grapple another member of the troupe. No sort of combat may ever be performed — that is one thing that you should leave for the dice to decide. Live-Action in Vampire is talking, not fighting.

• No props can be used if they must touch another player to be effective. No real weapons of any sort can ever be handled at any time during Live-Action roleplaying. Only those toy guns that can be easily detected as being toys can be used (like squirt guns), but the no-touch rules must still apply.

• Play inside your own home, or whatever private place the game normally takes place in. Make sure that anyone else in the area understands what you are doing. Never perform Live-Action where people may be confused or frightened by what you are doing.

• When the Storyteller calls for a time-out, all action must immediately stop. Even during Live-Action (especially during Live-Action), the Storyteller's word is final.

Atmosphere

Before the players arrive, think about the atmosphere of the area where you are going to game.

• If at all possible, play only in the evenings.

• Try to cut out all overhead lighting — it's too much like the sun, and, as you well know, Vampires never see the sun. Use only table lamps or candles.

• Candles are par-excellent for **Vampire**, no game session should be without them, but be careful with open flames.

• Try to play music that will add to the setting. Classical when you're trying to convey a sophisticated setting, or loud punk when the characters visit a sleazy club, and country when they're with a real hick. Creepy music is nearly always appropriate. The clashing of musical styles can be a great way to build up a feeling of discordance. (A CD of sound effects for **Vampire** will probably be available from White Wolf soon.)

Props

Props are a great way to get people involved in the story, and they are essential for Live-Action. Here are some ideas for props that you can actually use.

• Skull-shaped candle

• Fake ancient map

• Fake scroll

• Books

• Hats (switch them when you play different characters)

• Cloak (actually wear it, hide yourself in it)

• If you're an artist, have some drawings of people and places ready to be shown. Or you can use photographs torn out of magazines or taken from your family's photo album.

Creating a Story

So fair; so sweet; withal so sensitive
All vain desires, all lawless wishes quelled
Be thou to love and praise alike impelled
Whatever boon is granted or withheld.

— William Wordsworth

Designing the story is one of your most important tasks — it is very similar to designing the Chronicle. A story is almost always built around a series of conflicts or problems that the characters attempt to overcome to achieve their aims.

While you do not always have to design a story ahead of time, make sure that some sort of consistent story is told. If your Chronicle becomes detailed and rich enough, the characters will be able to find something interesting to do without your planning ahead of time for them. They will guide themselves through their stories. Until that point, however, you will need to devise stories for their amusement. Even if they do guide themselves, you should try to get an idea of what they plan to do in the next session so you can plan for it.

Preparation is often the most important part of a good story. While stories can often be conducted with just a few notes and some good ideas, a story is usually made much better if you have time to design it at your leisure. If you plan your stories out carefully, they will seem more real than stories which you have not prepared for at all. However, these prepared adventures tend to give the players less free choice than they want — they are forced to act and do certain things, herded through what is essentially an inescapable plot. This can make a lot less fun for them.

Freeflowing stories can be far better than preplanned ones, but also can be very disjointed and chaotic. Off-the-cuff stories that can lead anywhere can make both the characters and the Chronicle more vivid and exciting — it certainly allows the characters a great deal of free will. However, these types of stories can be much more difficult to tell than a story where you know exactly what is going to happen next

The best way to be ready for what the characters are going to do next is to simply have a firm and detailed grasp of the setting. There are a number of Vampire supplements which you can use to gain an even more detailed understanding of the world, but your efforts are essential to give stories the depth they truly require.

Though the players may go and do what they want, it doesn't mean you don't do any work. On the contrary, it simply means you have to work all the harder to come up

with appropriate things to interest them — such things as characters, plots twists, traps and obscure items.

Being a Storyteller is much more than simply being a game referee, there is a certain amount of art involved as well. When you are a Storyteller, you must treat your job very seriously, for you are the person responsible for making it all fun.

Though some literature professors might not agree with us, we have divided the story up into five different aspects to allow you to gain a better insight into what stories incorporate and what they require. These aspects are Theme, Conflict, Drama, Plot and Mood.

Theme

Every story needs a theme. It's important because it's a way you can fit everything together, even the things that are very different. Furthermore, a theme also focuses the players' attention and makes it easier for them to learn something from the story. Such a learning experience is often what gets people to enjoy a story.

The theme is more than a moral from Aesop's fables, it is instead indicative of the direction, flavor and purpose of the story. While it is not necessary to pay attention to the theme while playing the game, this information will at least provide a foundation for your story. If you are ever unsure how to tell a portion of the story, then you may always fall back on the theme for guidance.

Make the central purpose of your story the exploration of the theme. It can be what ties everything together and makes sense of the disparate elements of the story. This will make the whole story a better experience for everyone involved, and it can add a new dimension to your roleplaying by making it more of an artistic, fulfilling and thoughtful process.

The theme is usually qualified as a question that the story presents, but the answer is not given. It can be practically anything, from "What is evil" to "Why do so many people lie about their age?" Some of the most common themes ask about leadership, rage, and the cycles of nature.

The story becomes larger than life when you make it not only an adventure but a moral lesson as well. Faerie tales, myths and even Star Trek™ use this technique to make stories more vivid and compelling. This gets at why we tell stories in the first place. Stories almost always have a moral. However, in good stories, the lesson that is learned changes from listener to listener. The Storyteller shouldn't have a prepackaged lesson ready; rather, it should present a situation and let the players make of it what they will.

The theme is not meant to make the story more serious or high-browed. Neither is it intended to give you the opportunity to diatribe on right and wrong or good and evil. The theme is simply intended to help you create a better story, a story with more depth, pathos and significance. Don't put too large an onus on the theme and it will work out for you.

Below are several examples of themes you can employ in your stories. Do not take this as any sort of complete list, as there is no end to the number of different themes you can use in your stories. They are described by the issues and questions that the theme should raise in the minds of the players.

• Love — What is the impact of love, the power of love, and the weaknesses that love can bestow? What effect can it have on the characters lives; how can it change them?

• Bitterness — What causes the emotions of hate and vengeance? Why can they not be controlled? How can they ruin a life?

• Mythology — Where do our myths really come from? Why are they so important to us? Are all the legends true — which are false? Bring this across by having the characters explore the Vampire myths.

• Chaos — Is there any truth or security in the universe, or is everything always in such a continuous state of flux that peace is truly impossible?

• Conventional Morality — How useful is the typical morality of society? Where does it excel and where does it fail? Is there anything better and is perfect morality possible?

• Leadership — What is the value of leadership? What is required of a leader? When does leadership fail?

Conflict

Conflict provides meaning and energy to a story, and directs the course of the plot. It is what propels the story by involving and motivating the characters. Though the characters need not be principles in the conflict, by simply being somehow enveloped in it, they can be involved in it. Conflict is the reason the story is interesting enough to tell or to listen to in the first place — it is both entertaining and illuminating.

Any collision or disagreement, contention or controversy, struggle or quarrel can be seen as conflict. It is people or groups of people who find it difficult to get along, either because of incompatibility, mutual antagonism, or a basic opposition of interests and principles. Conflict need not be between enemies, and it need not be resolved with the shedding of blood. Sometimes it can be an internal process in one individual.

You can mix many different conflicts into the same story, but in order to not confuse things too much, one or two elements are a good number. You can use conflicts in your story in the same way that Archetypes are used in a character — one conflict is what the characters think is going on (the Demeanor) while the second conflict is what is really going on (the Nature).

In **Vampire,** there are thirteen different levels of conflict that you can use in your stories. Though we describe

them in brief below, you will need to use them in new and interesting ways by mixing and matching.

• **Kindred vs Hunters:** There are many who pursue Vampires. Some only to learn, but most to slay.

• **Anarchs vs Elders:** The young always resent the rule and the patronization of the old, and the Kindred community is no exception.

• **Kindred vs Lupine:** The Werewolves deeply resent the intrusion of Kindred into their territory, which includes most of the world outside the cities. The rivalry and animosity runs deep between the two groups. Lupines also may have obscure plans and missions that may direct them into the city, which they despise, and thus into contact with the Kindred (and perhaps the characters). They are very skillful and tough opponents.

• **Kindred vs Jyhad:** The Jyhad is an ancient conflict, and most of the Kindred are somehow tangled up in it — most of them without even realizing it. The Jyhad exists on every level of Kindred society, and practically any sort of intrigue can be considered to be wrapped up in it.

• **Camarilla vs Sabbat:** This at base is simply the conflict between these two Sects, but it can also be see in terms of the eternal war between order and chaos, mercy and hate. Of course, the truth about the Sabbat is not really known, yet.

• **Humanity vs the Beast:** The inner war between the silence and the rage never ceases. Vampires are constantly in turmoil as they struggle to contain the Beast within. A Beast I am, lest a Beast I become. For more roleplaying oriented stories, this can be an excellent conflict, as it allows you to probe deeply into the personalities of the characters and players.

• **Clan vs Clan:** The Giovannis could be attempting to create a world Hegemony, or the Tremere are pushing for a meeting of the great Conclave.

• **Kindred vs Kindred:** Warfare over hunting ground and turf is not uncommon, and the horror of Diablerie is always of concern.

• **Kindred vs Mystics:** There are many in the arcane orders of wizards who have use for Vampires. It is said that they have strange rituals which require the Blood and organs of Kindred.

• **Kindred vs Prince:** Political upheaval in the city is always tumultuous, especially if the Prince is involved, not as a judge, but as a contestant.

Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust.

• **Kindred vs Society:** The Masquerade must be maintained, lest all be destroyed. It is a continual struggle for the Kindred to keep themselves a secret from the press and society

• **Kindred vs Victims:** The characters might hunt someone really interesting and powerful (rub out a mob-boss) or the mortals might be fighting back.

• **Kindred vs Unknown:** The characters do not realize who their enemy is, or who seeks their demise. This makes it all the more terrifying.

• **Sanity vs Madness:** There is much in the life of a Vampire that can drive them to madness and insanity. Resisting it is most difficult, as it is not often possible to escape the circumstances which created such a terrible slide.

• **Survival vs Justice:** The most cerebral of conflicts, the conflict of the needs of survival and the demands of justice, is often the most difficult to resolve.

Plot

The plot is the basis of the story. In fact, when we talk about the story, we are sometimes talking about the plot. Plot describes the progress of the story, through scenes and events. With a poorly conceived plot, you have a terrible story, but with a complete and intricate plot, you have the beginnings of a great story.

Try to insert plot twists whenever possible. Simply change the plot mid-stream to add an element of surprise to the story. This could be a "snake in the grass" — a friend that turns out to be an enemy or a victim that turns out to be a monster. Or it could be the old "Switcharoony" — one of the player characters that lost all his Humanity becomes the biggest villain in the Chronicle. Now the property of the Storyteller, the character can truly make everyone's life miserable.

Detailed below are the various stages the plot can go through. Use them as a rough guide on how to structure your plots and to provide ideas on what you might need to include.

Setting the Scene: You need to explain to the players where they are and what they might expect. This can take only a few seconds, or you might want to have a whole descriptive scene worked out ahead of time that you can read to them. It is usually best to set the scene actively, by allowing the players to interact with it, rather than simply making a descriptive monologue. Describe what the characters see, smell and hear.

Hook: You need something realistic and compelling to get the characters and the players involved in the story. You can be brutal and force them into it (e.g. "You hear knocking on the door, and someone shouts 'it's the Police'"), but there are better, more subtle ways.

You should present the players with the major conflict of the story in a unique and compelling way that teases, tantalizes and promises extraordinary adventure. You want to capture their imagination from the start, so as to involve them in the story as deeply as possible.

In each story, the player should immediately become aware that something is amiss, danger is awaiting, or some threat hangs over the characters. You draw the players into the narrative and arouse their curiosity.

This all must come in the opening scene, or at least in some sort of narrative you perform. However, you should set the opening as dynamically as you can, so that the players have a chance to perform actions and affect the plot from the very beginning. We live in a fast-paced world and players are easily bored. If you don't get them involved from the start, they will give up on the story and there is nothing you can do that will get them back into it at the same level of concentration.

Buildup: You need to give the characters chances to overcome obstacles, by providing them with elements of the central conflict of the story to confront. The buildup needs to create a feeling of suspense and propel the characters forever onward into some sort of climax. In **Vampire,** the buildup should be constant and inexorable. When it is halted by dead-end investigations or dull periods, you should try to make those interruptions as short as possible. Keep the players involved and tell the story so that there are multiple ways to reach the conclusion. Don't let them bog down so completely that the mood and urgency of the story is lost. The buildup refers to a buildup in emotions, and it is a very tricky medium to affect. You must not falter.

False Crescendo: Sometimes you will want to build the tension up, way up, and then relax it again, as a way to really get the players raring to go. False crescendoes are an excellent way to do this. You simply make the characters think that they have reached the climax, and then present them with new elements of the problem to face. These might even be miniature climaxes that give the players some sense of resolution, but do not completely wrap things up. At the end of each chapter of your story (each game session), you might want to leave things hanging, or you may wish to have everything wrapped up in a mini crescendo.

Climax: This is the great resolution of the story, where all questions are answered (or at least some). If the characters are successful, and they should not always be, then this ending must satisfy the players. In any case, it must be a logical result of events that you set into motion at the start of the story. The climax cannot be forced — the players must be emotionally prepared for your ending. It must descend naturally from what has occurred before and be affected by what the characters have done. The characters' actions must have an effect upon the nature of the story's conclusion. The climax should never be preordained.

Trailer: This is a special ending that often follows the climax and winds down the story. For some reason, it is hard to make trailers work out right. They either seem trite or get ignored by the players. Though a trailer may be hard to do, it is an excellent way to set up for the next story, and unwind the players from the intensity of what has just occurred. It is also a way for the characters who squared-off during the story to make up. Trailers can be a lot of fun to roleplay, as they allow the characters to interact with one another in a relaxed way. Use the trailer as a reward for your players. Give them new information, have another character wrap up the loose ends of the story, or have the characters rewarded in some other way as well.

However, do not mix the trailer with the climax — keep them separate. Also do not ramble on with the trailer for too long; it should normally be very short. Once the suspense and drama is concluded, the curtain should come down shortly thereafter.

Drama

Just as plot takes place within a setting, drama is the most important element of plot. Drama, for our purposes, is any series of events having vivid, emotional, or striking results. Dramatic moments are the sensational, startling, and deeply involving periods of the story, when you rivet attention onto what is occurring. They are the most intense and exhilarating moments of the plot. Often this focus is achieved because the lives of the characters are at stake, or the object of all their attention is about to be revealed.

You need to have these periods of intense excitement and stress, so that the characters have the opportunity to directly affect the plot through their characters' actions and abilities. Creating drama in a scene can sometimes be a difficult task, but it is essential if you want to create an engaging story. Drama can be seen as simply a feeling of excitement, but there is more to it than that, for drama is the essence of a story.

Just as an author or movie-maker has to maintain tension, pace and flow in the stories they present, so a Storyteller in a **Vampire** game has the same responsibilities towards her "audience" of players.

There are a number of different techniques you can use, but you should realize that the ways in which you create drama in your stories must suit the way in which you tell a story. Dramatic verisimilitude is not so much a skill as it is a talent — you've got to learn it for yourself.

You shouldn't simply stage a dramatic scene normally. Always mix it with something else to make it different and new. If you're planning a gun battle, don't simply serve it straight up, mix it with a heart-stopping car chase down a mountain, set it in a graveyard with lots of creeping around and misinformation, or somehow introduce new situations that force and encourage new strategy and tactics. Somehow make each scene different, so later on, the players can look back and have something they will remember it by.

The Drama chapter is your guide to creating effective dramatic monuments. Use it to create and sustain drama in your story. Those action scenes are so often intrinsic to the players having a good time.

Mood

Every story should have a certain emotional vitality that is in some way unique to itself. The mood of a story describes the emotions you want your players to feel as it is told. The emotional response of the players is often of great importance, as it defines how much they "get into" it. Each story needs to have its own mood, so that you can affect the players in a way that heightens the effect of the story.

Create a distinct atmosphere for each story. Ask yourself what is the dominant emotional tone of your story. Adding mood to a story is the best way to arouse real and vivid emotions. Players get into the story so much that they feel what their characters feel. When players get to this point, not only

All vestiges of the Beast are gone, though the memories of those horrible nights will never fade.

does the character become real to them, but the world as well. The most precious moments in Storytelling are at such times. They are transcendent, illuminating and indescribable — when it happens, you'll know. This is the best that storytelling can get.

Creating the mood begins at the very start of the game session. Always make sure the players have enough time to get comfortable. They should get their socializing out of the way so they are ready to get into the roleplaying. Try to time things so that when you enter into the story, the players are ready to go. After they dim the lights in the movie theater, there is always a slight pause. That brief moment is somehow always enough to bring anticipation and even a sense of delight. If you can accomplish the same sort of thing before every session of **Vampire**, you will be highly rewarded.

Then start out with something dramatic and quirky that gets the players into the mood and gives a clue as to what the story will be about. Perhaps you can start with a long low growl (another Kindred in the bar they are at), tell them that they hear sirens in the distance (and then have them get closer and closer), or say nothing at all but just stare at each player in turn (a Malkavian trying to decide who to speak with first). If you start with a bang, you ensure that the story will have a mood, and a better chance of actually affecting the players.

As the story progresses, continue to do things that accentuate and highlight the mood and tone of the story. In your descriptions of people or settings, use your voice, eye contact with the players, the encounters you create, the pacing of events, and the rolls you have the players make to carry across the mood. Use every tool at your disposal to build and perpetuate the feelings that you want the players to feel.

Below are examples of some of the different types of moods you can create in your stories.

• **Brooding:** There is a heavy weight in the air and a sense of great evil hangs over all that the characters do.

• **Romantic:** There is a beauty and charm to the mood and somehow things seem particularly special and bright. Romance is probably the most difficult mood to evoke. Description is probably your best tool, though certainly the type of story being told is vital.

• **Mysterious:** Fog and shadows. This is the mood of Casablanca and the Maltese Falcon. Characters do not fully understand all that occurs.

• **Exciting:** Non-stop action that is full of intensity. Include lots of dramatic moments and suspense, anything to keep the players' blood pumping. To effectively create this mood, you need to somehow make things different and new, otherwise your drama will end up seeming stale.

• **Dank:** The story feels rancid and quite foul. Portray the degenerate aspects of the world, that which is not quite evil, but is simply dirty. Don't allow any black and whites.

• **Eerie:** Nothing seems like it is actually occurring. Everything has a strange, unreal quality to it. Play up the bizarre aspects of what is going on.

• **Madness:** This is the mood of madness and chaos — the feeling that things are out of control, and that there is neither rhyme nor reason to life. Throw things at the players randomly. Make organizing and correcting things very difficult and never give the players a moment's peace. Carry across the idea that the world is a very demented place.

• **Idyllic:** This is the mood of peace, tranquility and pastoral bliss. Of course, that sets the players up for the setting to be dashed to pieces latter on.

• **Humorous:** You might want to take an even greater break, and make the mood very light hearted. Humor has its place in **Vampire**, as long as it is properly employed. Never overdo it.

Story Concepts

And I knew that this was only one of the many agonies, many deaths, in the unending scarlet loop of my modius existence. It had happened before, was happening now, and would happen again...and again...and again.

— Dan Simmons, *Carrion Comfort*

Below are fifteen ideas for story elements you can use as starter kits for creating your own stories. They are issues, situations and themes which can enable you to create a story. Read them over to get ideas and pick one that you like. Then create a complete story from it. Eventually, you'll want to come up with an idea of your own.

Many of the best **Vampire** stories incorporate very human values and issues which the character must face. They are trapped in very alien situations, yet find themselves in very familiar problems. Remember this as you create your stories and you won't find it as hard to come up with ideas.

Adventure: If you want to keep your players amused, you've got to give them a chance to cut loose, to go on an adventure — sometimes that means some gratuitous violence. If the players need the blare of gun fire to keep them amused, give it to them, not all the time, just every once in a while. However, don't let the players think they can treat the police as if they were punching bags (a.k.a. the town guard), and make sure that no matter how outrageous things get, Humanity rolls are always made. After the excitement is over, there needs to be a period of silence, of solemn introspection. If you need really bad villains and bad guys, only fellow Vampires will really do.

The Masquerade: Neonates' temptations to make the world what they will via their newfound powers

must be tempered by a realization of what an aroused world can do to them. Often the players will have to deal with hunters without killing, injuring or even threatening them. At the same time, they must prevent mortals from discovering the truth about the existence of Vampires. For instance, killing the newspaper reporter hot on their trail will only draw the attention of even more journalists, so the players must figure out a way to get him off the trail.

Alternatively, some other Vampires may become too obvious for the players to allow their activities to continue unhindered. How do they deal with a rock star who can back up his claims to immortality?

Tragedy: While the entire game of **Vampire** is marked by constant tragedy, it is possible to work individual stories around that idea. The basic idea of tragedy is that no matter what the tragic figure does, there is no way to avoid the tragic ending. Whether it is Oedipus destined to slay his father and marry his mother, or King Lear killed by his own pride, the main character is what she is and cannot change her fate. In **Vampire**, the players have more free will than these figures of literature; however, the very fact of a Vampiric existence leaves them open to the destructive rampages of Frenzy. Though they may be able to control that Frenzy, this will not always be the case.

The secret of using tragedy in a story is finding a way to make what the characters are work against them. If a character or characters Frenzy at an inopportune moment, say when visiting the Prince or while surrounded by police, the characters will have to spend the rest of the story atoning for these mistakes.

Remember that Frenzy is not the only tragedy of a Vampire's existence. Place the characters in situations where they must feed off loved ones in order to survive or have their enemies strike at them through those same allies. Even though the world of **Vampire** is rife with such horror, you must always give the players at least a modicum of free will in their characters' fates.

Escape: No matter how powerful the players are, there is always something more powerful. Imagine the players having to escape from New York with the mob, their Sires, the Sabbat and the police all after them for one reason or another. This can be a thrilling story, and the excitement is non-stop. It is also a great way to flip everything in your Chronicle upside down. There is something very archetypical about having to live by the seat of your pants in hostile territory, of surviving from day-to-day (or night to night, in the Vampire's case). However, players do not like to lose — don't let them know about it, but you've got to give them a better than even chance of surviving. In some cases, you might want them to have something to run *to* as well as something to run *from*.

Jyhad: The eldest Kindred see no reason to end their everlasting existences, especially not at the claws of those Fourth Generation whelps. Therefore, they manipulate, dominate and subjugate Vampires of all Generations to keep them from coming after their most valuable Vitæ. The players may become involved in anything from helping an Elder acquire a statue to preventing an all-out assault on her Haven. However, no matter how many other Vampires they must fight in the great game, their true enemy will always be the Elder behind the scenes, who is using them as pawns.

The Jyhad makes for an excellent Chronicle as well, since it can take many, many stories before the players begin to figure out who is behind what.

War of Ages: Similar to the Jyhad, the War of Ages involves younger Vampires trying to slay the Elders for their powerful Vitæ. On the flip side, the Elders know that they will need their younger Kindred alive on that day when mortal blood no longer slakes their thirst — yet another riddle in the Vampire's tortured existence.

The easiest way to set up this story is to have the characters hunted by an older Vampire. The second easiest is to present the characters with what seems to be an easy target, an older Vampire from whom they can feed, preferably someone who is very evil.

Intrigue: This is one of the best types of stories to tell in **Vampire.** It seems to fit the Vampire psyche very well. It is also very easy to do — simply involve the characters in the Machiavellian politics of Vampire society. They may be blamed for something, be witnesses to something, or get involved on their own accord. In terms of stories, intrigue is far better if the characters get involved on their own initiative and create their own plots. You need to offer them obtainable goals and ideas on how to get there, then you just cut them loose. In their efforts to climb and understand Vampire society, you have a very engaging story to tell.

The characters must watch their steps carefully, lest those with power choose to use it on them. For instance, a character's Sire enlists the characters in her scheme to become Prince by promising them great power. However, if the current Prince ever discovered their role in destroying his reputation, he would stop at nothing to kill them.

Vendetta: This concept starts out with you doing something really nasty to the players (something really embarrassing usually works the best). You make sure that you attach an antagonist to the "evil deed," giving a spiteful and hateful personality and then let the players loose. They'll tear each other apart just trying to get at the evil bully. This is probably the easiest kind of story to run, because the players

do all the work for you. The hardest part is setting things up so that the players really hale the bully, down to their very core. It's almost impossible to go too far in making the bad guy bad — lay it on thick.

Make sure the players spend a lot of time planing on how and when they are going to get their revenge. Let them imagine it often and in great detail. The longer you can delay their vengeance, the hotter they will get. In the end, you can have it all be a big misunderstanding, the bad guy is really a nice guy, but that can be a dangerous practice. The players get very frustrated when you try to pull things like that.

Mission: The players must undergo some sort of quest or mission, which has been "assigned" to them by someone else. They may be forced to do so through Blood Bond or Domination, through blackmail, or they may even be paid in some fashion. The characters may even be on the mission as a favor to a friend. While on the mission, they not only have to deal with the enemies of the person they are serving, but must also explore their relationships with the one who controls their existences. The mission gives you a great deal of latitude to create any sort of story you desire, since it does not have to fit in with the rest of the Chronicle as other sorts of stories do. However, the mission is also less fulfilling for the players and can be very aggravating. Use missions rarely, and space the stories in which you use the concept out widely.

Urban Nightmare: Vampires not only feed on the seamy underside of the city, they are an intrinsic part of it. The question of how they interact with the very environment which tears down so many mortals will be a critical one for the players. How do they deal with homeless who are unlikely to survive more than a few years on the streets, malnourished and ill residents whose blood is so tainted as to be poison to a Vampire, and people whose desperation has led them to kill over tennis shoes? Do the players act as angels of mercy while still feeding on the populace, or do they become just another bane in these people's lives?

At the same time, the Vampires must deal with an environment where they are constantly surrounded by sweet, tempting blood, where almost any action can be observed by someone and where picking the wrong victim can bring the swift and lethal retribution from armed police and criminals.

Wilderness Trek: Maybe the players don't like the city; maybe the peaceful countryside is more their style. However, in **Vampire**, that countryside is populated with Werewolves, Spirits, Faeries and farmers carrying 12 gauge shotguns loaded with buckshot in their pickup trucks. Is that old barn where the characters want to spend the day haunted by Ghosts, home to some young Lycanthropes, or is it deserted?

For **Vampire**, anything outside of the city is considered wilderness, and it is far more dangerous than it seems. The city offers security, since many of the mortal institutions in a city are controlled by the Undead, and there are innumerable places to hide no matter where you go. There are so many people in the city that it is easy to fade into the crowds. In the wilderness, it is much more difficult to hide and strangers are noticed, especially by the Lupines. They make it a practice to watch out for pale-skinned strangers, and to hunt them down during the day.

There are many reasons why Vampires might want to travel in the wilderness, chief among them to speak with one of the Inconnu, which is often necessary if Golconda is to be obtained. The characters may have to track down someone who is hiding in the wilderness, or punish a group of Lupines who have transgressed on the city. You can combine the wilderness trek with the escape story concept, and get a story that is really charged.

Romance: Vampires of both myth and cinema are often deeply sensual beings, both sexually and romantically. As creatures of untamed passions, they forge much more intense bonds than most mortals will ever know. The conflict between a Vampire's hunger and love, and the attempt to keep the Beast from destroying that which is most treasured, can be the concepts for innumerable adventures. For instance, how does the player cushion the shock for his mortal lover after he becomes a Vampire?

On top of their attachments to mortals, Vampires have to deal with the deep emotions they sometimes form with one another. The relationship between a Sire and his Progeny is not only that of a parent and a child, but can also be that of an experienced lover with a virgin. This makes it even harder, and perhaps even more important, for a Childe to become independent.

There are also the deep attachments Kindred form through Blood Bonds. While it is easy to play this out through the provided guidelines, it is more interesting to get the players to test the boundaries of their love and devotion to the other Vampire. They will sacrifice their Blood, their plans and even their lives to make the other happy. Of course, this becomes even more interesting when the other Vampire is Blood Bound as well (to the player or another Vampire).

Redemption: Some Vampires want nothing to do with the Hunts and Riddles which make up other Kindred's lives. For them, the goal is either to return to mortality or to find a balance of their hungers and their morals (Golconda). Though this is most often the theme of a Chronicle, it can make for an excellent story as well. Simply present the characters with an opportunity to set something right, to do something good. This could be anything from assisting an old man in combating the Brujah who is living in his home to helping a

Malkavian see past her delusions, and accept and deal with the fact that she is a Vampire. Often stories about redemption can involve the gain of Humanity, and indeed this is the only way to regain Humanity.

Baptism by Fire

Through these fields of destruction
Baptisms of fire
I've watched all your suffering
As the battles raged higher

— Dire Straits, *Brothers in Arms*

Forward

This introductory story is the first of a multiple chapter story. However, we only provide the first chapter in this story and it is up to you to conclude it. This chapter concerns a "party" that Modius, the Prince of Gary, Indiana, is hosting — all sorts of bizarre events can occur at it. There are any number of different paths you can choose to take, anything from chasing Sullivan Dane, a witch-hunter, to traveling to Chicago to deliver a letter to Lodin, its Prince. You must simply decide what subplot you want to focus on and weave a story from that.

We conclude this story in our own way in the supplement **Ashes to Ashes**, available where you purchased **Vampire.** It describes the characters' trip to Chicago in an effort to find Lodin, but their problems trying to find him while in the "City of Broad Shoulders" can begin here.

This story is intended to be the first you tell in **Vampire.** We have written it to be both an example of what a **Vampire** story can be like, as well as a good introduction to the Gothic-Punk world for your players. Much of it is intended to be played as Live-Action, though this is far from necessary. A number of different issues and conflicts are raised at the party, jump-starting the Chronicle and getting the characters involved right away.

In order to best tell this story and gain the most from it, you should integrate it closely with the **Forged in Steel** Chronicle, described earlier. All of the characters involved in this story are described in that section, as are many of its central issues. Read it carefully. How you conclude this story will be affected by what you plan for the Chronicle to become.

Scene One: The Party

The characters attend a party hosted by Modius, the Prince of Gary. All of the Vampires of Gary are there, so the characters have a chance to meet the major luminaries of the city and become involved in some of its intrigues. Depending on how you decide to conclude the story, they may pursue a number of different sub-plots.

If you don't plan to use **Ashes to Ashes**, it's a good idea to let the players choose which course of action they will take. Let them follow whatever sub-plot they happen to fall into, thereby charting the course of the Chronicle on their own. Though the Gary vs. Chicago conflict is presented as something that sweeps everyone up in it, you can downplay it to the point where the characters have the true option of whether or not to pursue that course of action.

It is recommended that this scene be played Live-Action if at all possible. This is best done by setting up a party in your own house, complete with low light and music, and of course refreshments (but don't let the players eat anything, at least not until the scene is over). You may even have the players wait outside the house on the porch, and come in one at a time. Try to get a few people to be First Mates, one or two would be enough, but if you had five or six, you would be well served.

Plot

Years ago, on every New Year's Eve, Modius would host a gathering of all the Kindred of Gary. Immediately following the setting of the sun, all the Kindred of the city were expected to show up at his home, and enjoy his hospitality and conversation. He has not held this party for some time, but has decided to do so again this year and word has been spread among the Vampires of Gary. In one way or another, all the characters know about it and understand that they are expected to attend. Allicia, Michael, Lucian, Danov, and Juggler (who arrives late with Evelyn) will all be present. The characters round out the guests.

This bash is an excellent opportunity for players to "get into character" and become intimately familiar with the politics of the lakeshore communities. The progression of different subplots at the party are described below. Just take them in order and play each one out until it starts to get a little old, then switch to the next sub-plot. If you are playing Live-Action and have a number of First Mates, it is likely that a number of different subplots will be occurring at the same time. This may be confusing to run, but it will be very exciting to play.

Though there are a number of different sub-plots at the party, some are more important than others. The central events that must occur are listed below in order of appearance. Don't miss any of them:

1) Modius greets the Characters as they arrive.

2) Allicia interacts with one of the Characters.

3) Juggler and his friends crash the party.

4) The Letter is delivered by Annabelle.

5) Modius asks the Characters to deliver a letter to Chicago.

This party is likely to be the first time that your group will roleplay their Vampire personas. Start slowly by giving the players a chance to do such mundane things as looking behind the drapes and talking with the "security," but gradually build up the intensity as time goes by. By the end of the scene, the players should be pumped up and ready for some action. Though this chapter doesn't really have much chance for action or drama (it concentrates more on setting things up), you will certainly want to include some in the next game session. If your players require action in every story, it shouldn't be too difficult to add it into this one. Have a character get into a fight with Juggler, a car chase with Sullivan Dane, or a skirmish with Annabelle's bodyguards (who you'll have to make up).

At the start of this party, you want to catch the players off-guard. Things will start with a very friendly and seemingly up-front Modius, and only later will they realize that Modius has ulterior motives. This party is meant to be a warning to the players. You cannot trust anything or anyone in **Vampire**, and things are never as they seem. Intrigue and politics pervade every word and motion among the Damned, and you must tread carefully.

The theme of this chapter can be anything you would like it to be, including romance.

Setting

The Prince's house is an old decaying mansion in the center of Gary. Once the home of a steel baron, it was built in the most illustrious neighborhood of the growing city. However, times have changed and most of the mansions in this neighborhood have been divided into apartments. Only Modius' house is left, and it has apparently sheltered Modius for quite a while. The passage of time has begun to affect the structure; indeed, the roof is near the point of collapse. Snow has gathered on the roof, and now water drips through holes in the ceilings and is collected in buckets that must be constantly emptied and moved by the servants.

If asked about the state of repairs of the house, especially for a Ventrue who spends so much time in his Haven, Prince Modius will display a surprising amount of paranoia regarding his safety. The characters will get the impression that Modius feels anything so noticeable as a roofing service working on the house is enough chaos to draw unwanted attention to his Undead existence.

The mansion is quite large, with over twenty rooms. Most of them are furnished in what would once have been considered the height of fashion — divans, chandeliers, grand piano, and leather armchairs — but now they are moth-eaten and almost decayed beyond use. On the main floor is the parlor, living room, dinning room, kitchen, Modius' office, and an art studio for Modius (which contains a dozen partially completed paintings, most of them depicting what seems to be a Dantesque vision of hell). Modius sleeps in a basement bedroom when he sleeps at the mansion at all. He has a second Haven, located in an old taconite processing plant near the lakeshore. At the end of the party, Modius leaves directly for that Haven.

The house is guarded by four large, white, tough-looking men — all of them stewards from the local unions. Armed with revolvers and truncheons, they have been told not to speak with the guests. They are under the Domination of Modius just as the servants are. They are dressed in work boots, jeans, and either flannel or blue work shirts.

Despite the decay of the surroundings, Modius' party is as elaborate and sumptuous as anything a mortal would throw. Vampires can't touch the stuff, but delicious-looking appetizers and main dishes are set on tables around the edges of the room, safely away from the dripping water. Classical music plays softly in the background (it's a Böse stereo system) and a dance floor has been prepared for anyone who knows ballroom steps — it's the only sort of dancing Modius will allow.

Dialogue

This scene is a good opportunity to determine more about each individual character and his ties to Gary. A number of small conversations could take place. Though most of the possible interactions between Kindred will be dialogue, there is a possibility that some action may take place as well. See the scenes below for examples of the types of conversations that can be held, and play out whatever dramatic moments you think are appropriate.

• *The Hunt:*

Before the players arrive at the party, you might want to suggest that they hunt for some blood. This is an opportunity for characters low on blood to fill up, but you don't want to have to do it for each player. This may well be the players' first experience with leading their characters through the often horrific process of hunting mortals. You won't always want to spend a lot of time on such scenes, but the first one at least should be fairly detailed and evocative. Refer to the Vessels section at the end of the story for suggestions for unusual encounters, though you are encouraged to create situations that you know will evoke a special response from the player or character in question. Often at the start of movies, they will have a scene with some sort of violence and mayhem to get the audience's attention. If you think that one of your players would like this sort of thing, begin the story with their character trying to deal with a botched hunt. Make it very exciting, dramatic and tension-filled, not only for the character involved, but for the players who are watching (perhaps another character could happen across the scene and save the day, it's a good way to connect two characters). It'll wake up the players for sure.

• *Formal Greeting:*

Modius greets the characters when they first arrive at the mansion. You should roleplay through this introduction for each character in turn. Ask the players when they are likely to arrive: early, just on time, late, very late. Have the "just on time" character arrive about ten minutes after the early one, the late characters ten minutes after that, and the very late about an hour after that (just before Juggler arrives). You will need to adjust these times if you are doing the scene Live-Action.

After being allowed to enter the foyer of the mansion by the union guards, characters will be able to approach the front parlor. Standing by the door to this room is Modius in an out-of-date tuxedo (complete with tails). He shakes hands and welcomes the characters to his Haven, always behaving with extreme courtesy. Remember that the characters met him at least once before when they were first released from their Sire and presented to him. Perhaps something occurred to one of the characters during their Prelude that you can have Modius refer to here, thus making the character more at ease. Once they are done with the pleasantries, the characters will be able to interact with the other guests at the party.

• *Enigmatic Danov:*

A Vampire stands in the middle of the dance floor in the parlor, smiling vacantly at the wall. This is Alexander Danov, a Nosferatu who has been wandering about the country for some time. Recently, he has come to the Chicago area, and Modius has given him permission to stay in Gary. Alexander will welcome the character by name, and will mumble something like, "You are new to the game, so unsullied. I will enjoy watching you grow tonight." He will be curious about the characters, wanting to know all he can about who they are as people, and to that end he asks questions about what the character thinks of morality, crime, Diablerie, Golconda, the Traditions, the Anarchs, etc. He is more interested in the person than where the person lives or what the person does. Use his questions as a way to get the players to think more about their characters.

As Danov speaks with a character, however, it is clear that he knows certain things about the character that they did not realize that anyone else knew. Hopefully, this will unnerve the player and give him respect for Danov. This will be repeated with each character in turn, until Danov has met them all.

He will listen in on other people's conversations, but will not start them himself. He understands everything that occurs, but will only observe what is going on and will not interfere in any way. The characters will either think he is a complete nut, or will understand his gentle wisdom. If Alexander takes a liking to one of the characters, he may give them a warning, "Don't let yourself be sucked in." But he will never explain what he means by it.

Remember that Danov is on the path to Golconda, so he can guide the characters in their quest to reach it (if they so wish). This is a long range objective of course, but Danov is the way you can weave it into the Chronicle.

• *Shy Michael*

A character may notice Michael standing in the corner of the dining room, as deep into the shadows as he can get. This simple-minded Brujah is very reluctant to speak with anyone, and if someone is able to roll an 8+ on an Perception + Empathy roll, they will realize that he is very frightened. If they are somehow able to question him about it (it will be very difficulty to do so), they will discover that he thinks he is being followed. If the characters go to the front of the house and look around, they may notice (on a Perception + Alertness roll, difficulty 7) that there is a man across the street sitting in a car watching the house. Though the character will not yet know who the man is, this is Sullivan Dane, an ex-Jesuit witch-hunter who is tracking Modius. If they attempt to pursue Sullivan, he will simply drive away. All those who reveal themselves to Dane, however, put themselves on his target list. If Modius is told about the person watching the house, he will become very frightened and may accuse the characters of being behind it. He then calls over one of his guards who leaves to go to a back room. Within minutes, sirens can be heard, and a little while later there are seven police cars in front of the house. You may use this as an opportunity to scare the characters, but the police are actually here on the orders of Modius. The police will stand guard outside until the end of the party. This is Modius' little way of demonstrating his power.

• *Imperious Lucian*

Another Vampire can be found in front of the fireplace (cold and empty) in the parlor, sitting in one of Modius' motheaten armchairs. This is Lucian, who will not even look up if a character comes around to speak with him. He is clasping his hands together loosely, fingertip to fingertip, and is glaring into the distance. If a character speaks with him, he will answer their questions, but in as few words as possible. If they become at all personal, he will become very angry and will threaten to not speak with them any further, but this is an empty threat — conversation, even dreary conversation, is better than simply sitting there. If he warms up to a character, especially if he has a crowd, he may spontaneously launch into a story about his past, explaining to them how he served under *the* Julius Caesar and was forced to slay his own Sire.

Speaking privately, he will warn one of the characters about the "treacherous spy from Chicago," that Danov person. He claims to have evidence against Danov, but will not reveal it, explaining that by doing so "I would bring the wrath of...

(and at this point he whispers) ... *Lodin*, down upon my head. I would not live to see the morrow."

He may also play games with a character whom he has taken a dislike too. Taking them off to a private corner, he says: "I would not tell you this, if I did not truly like you. You must be careful, there are things going on which you know nothing of." He will then pause, back away lightly, and say that it's too dangerous for him to go further, that "It may be better, certainly kinder, if you did not know the truth." Once he is convinced that he should tell them what he was going to say, Lucian continues: "Modius is a cannibal and practices Diablerie. He has reached such an age that he requires the Blood of Kindred to live. He has already eaten his way through the last batch, and it will not be long before he begins to hunt you as well." Lucian can't wait to see what happens in this little game of his.

Later on, Lucian will ask some of the characters if they know where Juggler is. He chuckles if they ask about him, and will say "This party will liven up a bit when he gets here, just you wait." However, he will not say anything more about the matter, telling the characters to be patient.

• *The Trap:*

At some point during the party, Modius and one of his servants will approach each character and engage in some small talk. He will be very polite and friendly, and will be, if anything, overly unctuous (don't overplay it, make him actually seem like a nice person). However, Modius has a secret itinerary — he desires to know the location of at least one Haven of each Vampire in Gary. He explains that he wants to be able to contact the character if a time of crisis arises. In actuality, this is his means of gaining more power over his fractious "subjects." If the character refuses, Modius will grow very angry, and in the future will distrust whatever the character says and does. He is paranoid, and all those who fail to humor him in his simple desires incur his hatred and fear. If a character lies about where their Haven is, they will be able to get away with it, at least for now.

• *Screwing Up:*

If anything occurs at the party that reveals that the guests are anything other than humans (e.g. a character uses Potence to lift up something very heavy), Modius will fly into a great rage and accuse the "perpetrators of this terrible crime" that they have broken the Tradition of the Masquerade. Unless he can be quickly calmed down, he will order the offending character to drink some of his Blood (thus bringing them closer to Blood Bond). The other Vampires will say nothing at this point, but if the characters attack Modius, the others will stand behind his authority, albeit reluctantly. Though he may be a fool, he is the Prince, and for most of the year he leaves the rest of the Kindred alone.

• *The Seduction:*

Allicia may be attracted to one of the characters, always a male, and usually the eldest or most sensitive looking among them. She might approach a character whom she met during the Prelude, or another in order to make the first jealous. Early in the party, Allicia will watch the character, but she always slips away if they stare back or try to approach her. Eventually, she will draw near the character, put her hand in his, and lead him away from the party. She furtively takes him up the servants' staircase to her room, where a dust covered, canopied feather bed sits. She closes the door and beings to touch the character all over, putting her finger over their lips if they attempt to speak. If things heat up, she will begin to cry, shedding tears of Blood, but she will pantomime that they are tears of joy, not of sadness. At some point, she may pantomime an offer to exchange Blood. Not only is this incredibly pleasurable for Vampires, but it would also make the character much closer to her because such a mingling is the first step of three toward creating a Blood Bond. However, as she is already Bonded to Modius, the character is one step closer to coming under the control of the Prince. However, you should let the character regain all of his Willpower because of the intensity of the passion, or perhaps even gain a new Willpower point altogether.

Modius will pretend to be the jealous and protective father if he catches the character with Allicia (which he will try to do, timing it so he catches them in the act of sharing Blood). He does this to get the character to trust Allicia even more, and thus to fall even more under his control. If the character and Allicia share Blood but two more times over the course of the Chronicle, Modius will have the character under his complete control — or so he thinks.

This is your chance to add romance to the Chronicle, or at least try it out to see if you want to include it. If Allicia truly falls in love with the character (judge by the of depth of the roleplaying), then she will side with the character and not with Modius. After a time, because of the deepness of the feelings involved, she will no longer be Blood Bound to Modius, and will thus be truly able to be Bound to the character. This will drive Modius into a terrible rage, and an extended Frenzy which will last for weeks. The two lovers will have to hide in fear for their existence, since Modius will use all of his resources to find them. The other characters will probably not be very pleased by it either, believing the character to be manipulated (use your storytelling skills to make them think this way, secret notes, etc.). It will likely become a very Romeo and Juliet-type situation, and could end tragically.

Make the scene in her room as romantic as you possibly can. Go slow, describe details, speak in a soft, low voice, and try to be very honest and direct in the way you speak. When you finally do look into the player's eyes (while roleplaying Allicia), do so only briefly, but do your best to

make it as sincere and sensitive a moment as possible. Don't be embarrassed when describing or playing the scene Live-Action. After all, this is only a game.

• *Midnight Toast*

As midnight approaches, Modius calls everyone into the dining room and the servants pass glasses of champagne around to all the guests. He stands formally before them all, and begins to speak of the future glory of Gary, and the rebirth of the union movement. He announces that he has managed to gather the power to get one of the steel mills to reopen. Within a few months, it will open and Gary will be sparked by a brief period of growth.

A few minutes before midnight, Modius looks towards the door and suddenly demands to know where Juggler is. If no one answers, he says, "That arrogant bastard will be punished for his tardiness to my court. I will not tolerate such behavior."

Then one of the servants steps forward with a watch in his hands and counts out the last seconds of the year. Modius raises his glass and at the stroke of midnight proposes a rather strange toast, "May we discover the beauty that we cannot share."

You might want to describe the grandfather clock striking out twelve in the background — just something to add a little tone to the mood.

• *Crashing the Party*

One of more radical Vampires of Gary, Juggler, arrives at the party quite late. Juggler crashes the party with a retinue of mortals in tow. The drunk mortals will immediately descend on any available females and start dancing. Juggler will scoop up Allicia for the same purpose. He turns off the classical music that Modius was playing and inserts a hard-core rock and roll CD which he brought with him. (At this point you should actually change the music to punk or heavy metal — AC/DC or the Butt-Hole Surfers would be appropriate.)

Modius, who was becoming very passionate in a diatribe against modern art, will be taken completely unaware. After a long moment of stunned silence, he will react by demanding that the mortals be killed for such a breach of the Masquerade. However, he does not even suggest that Juggler should be punished. He's terrified that the mortals might remember the house and what they saw going on inside of it. Keep in mind how paranoid Modius is of discovery.

It will be up to saner minds (i.e. the characters) to suggest that the mortals not be killed, but simply mind-wiped. Any character that participates in such wholesale slaughter of human life should definitely roll for loss of Humanity. You may wish to play up the Modius-Juggler conflict even more, but remember that though Modius is the Prince, he treats Juggler with respect and fear, more like an equal than a subordinate.

Juggler will only laugh at the debate and will take no part in it. Once some decision has been made, he stands back with a smile and lets the events unfold as they will. Juggler will not prevent the execution of the mortals, though he will not allow Evelyn to be harmed (see below).

Mingled with the humans is Evelyn, the woman Juggler Embraced without the permission of Modius. If one of the characters is also his Neonate, Juggler may give him a quick glance, as if to say "don't say a word." During the exchange between Modius and Juggler, Evelyn will approach one or two of the characters with naive curiosity and perhaps accidentally mention who her Sire is.

Juggler is openly contemptuous of Modius as well as most of the other guests, who he calls "the little slaves." He asks one of the characters (presumably his "rival") why he is present. Before they can answer, he will loudly announce, "You groveling Thrall. Do you not see past this meaningless ritual? It is the pathetic court of a windbag, senile, has been, weakling Prince." He may speak further with the other characters, seemingly interested in who they are, but everything he says is directed more toward Modius than anyone else. The language he uses is bold and direct, and he will hold no punches.

• *Evelyn's Presentation:*

Later on, after the excitement dies down, Juggler will present his Neonate to Modius. Suddenly turning off the music, Juggler announces to the others that there is "another guest whom you should all welcome to this gathering — my Childe, Evelyn." He then turns to Modius with a sardonic smile, and says, "Please, dear Master, why so glum? Is she not exquisite? Such well-sculpted beauty is so rarely found these days, and she has a spirit to match!"

Modius will not react well. He will in fact be outraged, but in the end he will do nothing. After yelling and making threats for several minutes, he will suddenly grow quiet and say simply, "I trust that you have taught her of the Traditions." Having said that, he will say nothing more on the subject, and will go back to his speech on the decadence of modern art.

As for Evelyn, she acts without fear and with great boldness, introducing herself to the others. She is curious about who everyone is, why they are here, and what sort of people they are—it is all, obviously, very new for her. After a time, she even goes over to Modius and speaks with him. Once she has done so, Juggler will shout, "Ah, you have welcomed her. She is one of us now."

• *Annabelle's Arrival:*

Late in the party, a message arrives from the Prince of Chicago. The letter is delivered by a woman of surpassing beauty. She is in fact one of the Elders of Chicago, Annabelle, Triabell, as well as an old friend of Modius (they are of the

same Clan). Before she enters the house, one of the servants comes in to tell Modius that she has arrived. Modius will look extremely surprised, and perceptive characters (Perception of 4 or more) will notice a look of terror flash across his face. Enterprising characters who look out one of the windows in the front of the house will notice a long white limo parked in front, and may even see Annabelle delicately step from it.

Once he learns that Annabelle has arrived, Juggler leaves the party, taking Evelyn with him. Exiting via the back door, they say goodbye to no-one, and try to make as little fuss as possible in doing so — in direct contrast to the way they entered.

Once Annabelle enters the room, it is clear that she is an exceptionally powerful woman. She looks about her at the guests, smiles, and gives her coat to one of Modius' servants. She then step over to Modius and patiently waits until he remembers to kiss her on the cheek. Once he has done so, she grasps his arms and leads him into his office, smiling politely at everyone else as they leave. A few minutes later, after some muffled shouts and exclamations coming from within (and an uneasy silence in the other rooms), they emerge. Modius is yelling wildly and clutching a letter written on a piece of parchment paper. "How dare he command me in this way! I will not tolerate it, Justicar or no Justicar." Annabelle, who comes out just behind him, replies, "His language is somewhat strong, but you must meet him halfway." They continue to talk back and forth about the letter, letting the players know that it is from Lodin and that it makes some sort of demand.

It should be obvious to the characters that Annabelle uses her influence with Modius to diminish his anger at the ultimatum from Lodin. Modius will vehemently protest the demands of Lodin, but will gradually settle down and tell the characters that they must present themselves to Lodin. If the characters interrupt Modius' conversation with Annabelle, he will become very angry and will use the anger as an outlet for his embarrassment.

Eventually, Annabelle convinces him to return with her to his office, where they remain for some time. Before they do so, however, Modius excuses himself and politely requests that everyone make themselves at home, and wait "but a few moments" for him to return. The characters will have about 15 minutes to spend discusing what occurred. If anyone tries to leave, one of the servants will fetch Modius, who will strongly "request" that they stay.

• *Announcement:*

When he finally emerges from his office, Modius makes an announcement (Annabelle leaves before he does so). He tells his guests that he is "rejecting this pile of rubbish, these contemptible demands," and that he will stand strong against the tyranny of Lodin. Then he tells them that he wishes the "Neonates among us," to travel to Chicago and deliver a reply to Lodin. Looking quite fierce, Modius explains that he will not tolerate any interference in the affairs of his city.

He offers to make the characters "my emissaries to Lodin, to make it clear to him that I am not his servant." No non-player Vampire will respond to the offer, so maybe the characters will decide to accept. If they do not, Modius will request that they do so. If they still refuse, he will threaten them, cajole them, bribe them and will in fact do anything to get them to go to Chicago (he has no choice). He will give the leader of the group a sealed letter to present to Lodin. If it is ever opened, the characters will discover it to contain only empty platitudes and excuses, the meaning of which is not exactly clear.

To assist his official representatives, Modius supplies the "volunteers" with another letter requesting safe passage for his official emissaries. Modius assures the characters that this paper will allow his representatives to reach Lodin without any trouble — he is not simply mistaken, he's knows full well that the letter is worthless.

Before they leave, however, Modius will bring one of the characters over to the side and say privately to him or her: "You understand of course, for the sake of formality, that you may need to present yourself to him. You do see, don't you, a formality. In his delusioned mind, he sees you as *his* subjects, and requires you to present yourselves to him just as you were presented to me. It probably won't do any harm to humor him, after you deliver my letter, of course."

• *Words of Advice:*

Before the characters leave, Lucian will approach one of the characters privately and tell him or her that if they have any troubles in Chicago to go to the Succubus Club. He describes to them an old friend of his who frequents it, a Vampire named Sir Henry Johnson. While he is explaining this, however, Modius intervenes and tells the characters that the Succubus Club is "nothing but the hangout for the dregs of our kind. It is for those who wish to pretend they have spirit, when in truth they do not." However, it is the only real lead the characters have. If they do not go to the Succubus Club, they will not know where to go at all.

Characters

See the Chronicle chapter in this book for details of the Kindred in Gary. Annabelle, an Elder from Chicago, is described here.

Annabelle Triabell

Born: 1722, Paris

Apparent age: late thirties

Generation: Sixth

Description: Of average height and slightly above average build, she has stylishly shoulder cut ash blond hair and wide, sky-blue eyes. She has a large, full mouth and the bearing and appearance of a high fashion model.

Clan: Toreador

Nature: Bon Vivant

Demeanor: Bon Vivant

Notes:

Annabelle is the eldest of the Toreador Lineage in Chicago, though you would never know it by her actions. She is a hedonist, living in the public eye under the name Ellen Stanley-Greer as the wife of John Greer, publisher of the Sentinel syndicate of newspapers. Greer is an older man, in his late sixties, who is apparently completely under her control. The two have been married since the early sixties, and the local media has begun to comment on the apparent agelessness of Mrs. Greer.

She knows no other life except excess. Her existence is a decadent whirlwind of action and sensation. Many of the younger Kindred in Chicago spend at least a short time in her retinue, experiencing things quite literally undreamed of by mortal man. Lodin is continually coming to odds with her over her behavior and the continual threat of a media scandal.

She has come to be a friend of Modius, the Prince of Gary, who is quite flattered with her attentions. It is probably an attempt on her part to create friction between the two Princes, and thus to allow her a greater measure of power. She manipulates both in order to increase the tension between them as well as decrease it. None know her true motivations.

VAMPIRE™

Annabelle Triabell

Attributes

Physical		Social		Mental	
Strength	●●○○○	Charisma (Smooth)	●●●●○	Perception	●●●○○
Dexterity	●●●○○	Manipulation (Friendly)	●●●●○	Intelligence	●●●○○
Stamina	●●○○○	Appearance (Alluring)	●●●●○	Wits	●●●○○

Abilities

Talents		Skills		Knowledge	
Acting	●●●○○	Animal Ken	○○○○○	Bureaucracy	●●●○○
Alertness	●●●○○	Drive	●○○○○	Computer	○○○○○
Athletics	●○○○○	Etiquette (High Society)	●●●●○	Finance	●●○○○
Brawl	●○○○○	Firearms	●○○○○	Investigation	○○○○○
Dodge	●●○○○	Melee	●○○○○	Law	●●○○○
Empathy (Motives)	●●●●○	Music	●●○○○	Linguistics (Compliments)	●●●●●
Intimidation	○○○○○	Repair	○○○○○	Medicine	●○○○○
Leadership	●●○○○	Security	○○○○○	Occult (Kindred Politics)	●●●●○
Streetwise	●○○○○	Stealth	○○○○○	Politics	●●○○○
Subterfuge (Seduce)	●●●●○	Survival	●○○○○	Science	○○○○○

Advantages

Disciplines		Backgrounds		Virtues	
Auspex	●●●●○	Fame	●●●●○	Conscience	●●○○○
Presence	●●●●○	Influence	●●○○○	Self-Control	●●●○○
Dominate	●●○○○	Resources	●●●●○	Courage	●●●○○
Celerity	●●●○○	Retainers	●●○○○		
Fortitude	●○○○○		○○○○○		

Other Traits: ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○

Humanity: ●●●●●●●○○○

Willpower: ●●●●●●●○○○ □□□□□□□□□□

Health: Bruised □ Hurt -1 □ Injured -2 □ Wounded -3 □ Mauled -4 □ Crippled -5 □ Incapacitated □

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Blood Pool: ○○○○○○○○○○

Experience:

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Afterward

Upon completing **Baptism by Fire**, you have three options. First, you may feel that the party was a fitting conclusion to your first **Vampire** Chronicle. Things may not have gone right and the players may have had enough of Gary. You can start all over by giving everyone a chance to make up new characters now that they know what it going on. This also gives you a chance to create your own unique Chronicle, as well as stories of your own.

Your second option is to continue the story by creating your own ideas on where it will go. There are any number of different sub-plots you can follow; indeed, much of the Chronicle could involve following up each and every sub-plot presented above.

Your last option, of course, is to purchase **Ashes to Ashes** and play out the "official" version of the story. In this book, the characters venture to Chicago and get the run around from everyone they meet. They must choose whether they will get involved with the Anarchs or the Elders, and in the end discover that they cannot meet with Lodin, for he is missing. Unfortunately, they are blamed. The characters will have to prove otherwise — or they will never leave Chicago.

Even if you plan to look at **Ashes to Ashes**, you might not want to use it in your Chronicle. Continue the story on your own, and then read the supplement to see how we did it. Often by comparing someone else's ideas to your own, you gain a better understanding of how the game works and the possibilities for things that can occur.

Vessels

At various and unpredictable points in any **Vampire** story, the characters will probably hunt in order to replenish their Blood Pools. While it is a simple matter to place another bum in an alley or have some street punk wandering late at night, it will soon become a chore to create interesting encounters involving possible Vessels. Therefore, almost every published **Vampire** Chronicle will contain an Appendix such as this one, listing about a half-dozen encounters you can use when the characters' hunting instincts have been primed.

1. The victim is a hemophiliac. As soon as a Vampire begins to drain his blood, the Vessel will mutter something about his condition. A character who continues to suck must make a Medicine roll. Success means they know that their bite has penetrated deep enough to cause slight internal bleeding that will not be healed by their saliva. If the Vampire does not either immediately stop or at least make sure the victim receives medical care after the draining, then he might lose Humanity.

2. This poor woman went to three different locations today where she sold some of her blood for much-needed cash. She is therefore currently very low on blood (Blood Pool of only five), so if much is taken from her, then she will die. An Intelligence + Medicine roll is required in order for the character to note that the woman is low on blood. If the character feeds as normal, then the woman will probably die. Humanity loss might result.

3. The character sinks his teeth into a bag-lady, but she is very drunk after drinking four bottles of Nightrain. She did not seem drunk at all, but the alcohol in her blood will affect the character severely. Increase the difficulty of Frenzy rolls by two and take away two dice from all Dexterity rolls, as well as any rolls requiring concentration. This will last at least two or three hours, if not more. The hangover could be equally severe.

4. The junkie that the character feeds on has the "honor" of being a two-time victim. The first time was several years ago, and since then he has come to the conclusion that it must have been a Vampire that attacked him. He finds that the feeling of being bitten and having his blood pulled from his body is more exciting than any drug he has ever tried. He will remember it vividly (even though he was Dominated or Presence was used) and will be on the lookout for the character in the future to request that it be done to him again. This could mean trouble for the character, but fun for the Storyteller, especially if the feeding took place near one of the character's Havens.

Epilogue: The Release

So you have come all this way, just to hear my dying words?

You should know better than to listen to the rumblings of a sick old man.

Ha, foolish one. You crave to understand your predicament? You seek to come to know what you have become? To be told the secrets of the undying race, the flesh eaters?

Very well, I shall tell you not because I am afraid, but because it is my last wish to tell you these things. Listen closely, for I will not tell you of these things a second time.

You are cursed, know that first. You are cursed and you are condemned. Nothing you ever do will change that, for it is you who are evil. Do not pity yourself, the Damned are not allowed such petty sentiments. Never again shall you feel the pleasure of a clean heart. When you die, you will learn of your punishment. You are a monster and none among your kind has ever been able to control the Beast within. Neither shall you be able to resist it. I know this to be true. You need but look into your eyes to see that.

The Vampire is the pinnacle of the food chain, they are the hunters of the hunters, the peak in performance. On this earth, there is not a more advanced creature, a more rarified tool, a more efficient predator.

The life of the Vampire is marked by the crossed swords of ecstasy and despair. Torn by their extremes, they are wondrous beasts as often venerated as reviled. Beauty of form and action, deadly of intent and purpose.

Those of the blood are descendant from one being, the mythical Caine. It is said that they are descended from the third mortal being to walk this world and the first one born to that state. If it is so, and each Vampire can trace its blood back to him through less than twelve Generations, then they are closer to God than we mortals can ever hope to be.

A disquieting thought, yes? Ironically, the Kindred see themselves as being closer to Hell than Heaven; forever damned to walk the earth until fate or circumstance brings them final rest. The imagery serves them well if they are indeed the children of Caine; cursed by God to wander the earth, deathless, as punishment for the slaying of his worthy brother Abel.

It is said that mankind itself is doomed by the original sin of Adam's disobedience of God and his consumption of the fruit of the Tree Of Knowledge. It is only through purity of action and deed that mankind may redeem himself and achieve perfection. It is irrelevant whether you believe in Adam and the Tree Of Knowledge, for its truth holds strong regardless.

None of us are perfect beings, neither Kindred nor Kine, and we do not live in a perfect world. That is virtually all that can be said for certain. It is our duty to improve the state of our existence and of those around us, regardless of whether you believe an ultimate reward exists for our actions or not. We must all move from our imperfect beginnings to a greater perfection above us. We must work to carry those around us forward as they will be as weak as we. You may view the struggle as a ladder, if you wish, each rung, each act of goodness, takes us one step closer to redemption.

Do not be alarmed. I did not bring you here to discuss philosophy. Nor theology. We are here to discuss Humanity. Mine and yours.

You laugh at my words, you believe evil to be an antiquated concept. Evil is all too real, you but have to meet it to know its name.

Evil cannot describe an individual however, it can only describe the actions that those individuals do. Vampires are not creatures of pure evil, lacking even the tiniest shred of Humanity. No creature lives in such a world of black and white, not even them. You cannot judge them so easily.

How do we define evil? No, no, have no fear, I will not tread that well worn ground. Still, though, it is a worthy question to ponder.

There are some, many in fact, who believe quite strongly that there is real evil in the world. Many Vampires believe they are it. They point to the fact that Caine's curse was, and remains, transferable. They argue that it is God's will that Caine's sin curse the world in much the way Adam's did, but in a much more direct form. The Vampire is the agent of that curse, the evil inherent in the world. A very real, very active evil.

This disturbs many, as you might imagine. It is one thing for there to be temptation in the world, and the acceptance of evil therefore being purely self-determined. It is another to believe that there are actual agents of that evil. Many Vampires see themselves as mankind's torment. They revile in their role of evil incarnate. Why should they not? They are already damned.

Others believe in an inherent duality of existence. They point out that there can be no true damnation without the prospect of salvation. For without the latter, the former has no value. Without hope, there can be no despair. Without love, no hate, and so on.

If this is so, then salvation is always attainable, even for the worst of us.

The Vampire may be damned from the moment of his creation, but that only means the ladder he must climb is greater. His road to salvation is longer, more treacherous, and his redemption grander.

This is the path I choose so long ago. But fate was crueler than my desire. And now you see me, as I am. I am condemned for eternity for what I have done, and if I say it was done out of need, it is no excuse. Evil still flows in my blood.

Golconda.

There are other words for it, of course, but that is the one the Vampires most often use. The one's who are concerned with it, in any case.

What is it?

Golconda is either a place, or a state of being, depending to whom you speak. It is the point to which all Caine's descendants aspire. It is the point were true redemption occurs. The point of absolute understanding. The point where forgiveness is possible.

Forgiveness?

Why of Caine, of course. One of the later passages in the Book Of Nod says, I have been told (we pass these things along verbally you know)—

To rise from the darkness
To soar from the heights
To reveal the light inside
To forgive our Sire his sin
And thereby redeem our souls
That is our struggle
That is our test
We are the blessed
We are the damned
We are his Children

To forgive Caine his sin would redeem all of his line. All would be saved.

All.

Even those who do not seek to forgive Caine. Even those who haunt this world as evil incarnate.

And therein lies the rub.

From the beginning, there have been those who believed their roles as evil resplendent divinely proscribed. They do not believe in forgiveness. They do not believe in redemption. They have no need for such things. They are the Damned.

Those who climb the ladder, who wage the struggle, have always been at odds with those who see darkness as their Domain. The Damned do not see a ladder to climb, they see only the walls of their pit.

What?

Good against evil? Light against darkness?

Hardly. Can the ignorant be evil? No, no, I will not lapse into this either. You may, if you wish, view it in this manner, but your misperception will hinder you. Not all who aspire to Golconda will attain it. They will fall short because of their imperfections; failings that seem as "evil" as anything the darkest mind could imagine. You forget that the Vampire must kill to survive. The older he gets, the more powerful the being he must consume to live. Are these the warriors of light and goodness? Yes, you begin to understand.

The word Jyhad has come to be used for the conflict between the factions. Realize that there are more than two; it is not a binary proposition. There are fanatics and conservatives on both sides.

A simple gauge of a Vampire's power is by its Generation. How many Generations are they from the legendary Caine, the Sire of all the Kindred? It is known that some of a Vampire's power is passed down to its Childe. With this in mind, it is easy to understand how and why the oldest Kindred, those closest to Caine, are the most powerful. Caine's Blood, as it has passed down through the Generations, has become diluted with each making. The youngest of the Kindred are nothing compared to their ancestors.

They are still, however, powerful creatures, but the special gifts of Caine's Blood, the unique powers and abilities are rarely found here. Born within recent memory, the Kindred of these Generations are products of societies that have received the benefits of, and been victimized by, the rapid change.

A glimpse back at the last hundred to two hundred years clearly shows the tremendous changes that have swept over the world. Changes not only affecting the geo-political world, but the realms of philosophy, science, psychology, medicine, law and sociology. These are heady times for those who's near immortality allows them to live through, experience and ultimately outlive some of those changes.

Many of man's views and attitudes of the world have been reshaped or recast within the last quarter millennia. Science has removed or explained many of the fundamental mysteries of life and the cosmos, deepening at the same time the mysteries of the Kindred. Though some have tried, the same science that can reveal the nuclear heart of the atom, or the graceful curves of the DNA spiral, falls short of rationally explaining the immortal Vampire.

Where does this leave the modern Kindred? In a world that values reason and fact above emotion and mystery, where do we stand? Are they creatures of this world, or are they in fact the

ill-begotten descendants of a man cursed by God? And if they are, what future do they have?

What future indeed?

But I apologize. I had indeed promised to speak of what it is to be a Vampire, today. Here and now.

Pay attention.

Their great Jyhad is simply their fight of dominance, the dominance of the pack. They have slaughtered all other rivals, and now they only have one another to combat. They joined together to slay their Sire, for individually each of them were far stronger than the younger ones, and now they war among themselves.

Their contest is something of a ritual, an age old ritual you might say.

Those of the Third Generation, Progeny of Caine, hide now, somewhere, working their strings of power from the shadows. In their day, they ruled great nations and wielded power the likes of which those beneath them had never witnessed. When their power grew too great and they moved to dominate the world, Caine himself is said to have moved against them. All of his line are as damned as he, and the assumption of power would be an insult to God's desire. Many were destroyed. Those who survived withdrew from mortal society to manipulate in secrecy. Much of what came after was done in an effort to prevent such an event from ever occurring again.

It is just after that time that one can find the origins of what is often referred to as the Jyhad. From seclusion and in secret, brother warred against brother. Mortals, men and women, the great civilizations of man, and the potent forces of nature were their tools. They struck at each other subtly, carefully, fearfully of again bringing the wrath of Caine upon them..

I believe the word does have some etymological connection to the Jyhad you are familiar with. I know what you are thinking, however, Jyhad does not truly mean "holy war," though it is in that context that it has been used most often in the modern day. The term Jyhad means to pursue the cause of Islam to the utmost effort. Yes, that may involve warfare, but it does not need to.

I believe the original Progeny of Caine used Jyhad in the context of utmost effort, not in the context of war. Each would do all they could to achieve Golconda and stop those who worked to damn the world. Each would seek a path out of the misery.

The Jyhad may have been the origin of the Kinslaying. The Book Of Nod speaks more of it, but I have not read it. Regardless, when the warfare became too intense, too extreme, Caine stepped in and slew those he could find. I'm sure The Book Of Nod is more explicit as to why, but I can only guess. I believe Caine saw his Progeny using their powers, in whatever manner, and believed that to be an affront to God. Caine's curse was, after all, intended to be a curse. His children should not profit from his sin.

There are also those who believe that Caine is tormented by the fact that he did Sire others. He believes God views that too as an affront and has further denied him any hope of salvation. He does not believe in Golconda.

Yes, I, and others, believe that Caine yet exists. They fear him still. They fear that he will emerge out of whatever hole he sleeps in, view what horrors his Kindred have loosened, and bring his wrath down upon them. Oh yes, they fear him.

Those who understand, at least.

Many of the current Generations do not understand the concepts of the Jyhad, Golconda, and the struggle. They see only a deterministic world and are blind to the true choices before them. The choices of right and wrong, of morality and immorality, and yes, even of good and evil. They hear the words spoken by their Elders, but they do not understand. The proof is in their own form, but they are blind to it. Hopefully, you will understand.

Why do they not understand?

Their Elders are afraid. Afraid to speak of the struggle and afraid of Caine. To them, the act of even speaking of Golconda would reduce its importance. It is something they both desire and fear. Is your tongue so pure that you may speak of the holiest of holies?

Do you see now why I risk so much by speaking and you listening?

As you know, as a Vampire ages he sometimes grows spiritually tired and must rest. Sometimes it is the shear burden of his existence that forces him to ground. For others, it is fear. Fear of all I have mentioned before. The first children of Caine, those of the Second Generation, sleep now, each for his or her own reason. The Jyhad has been passed on to their Progeny, and their Progeny's Progeny. The Third Generation are said to be the masters of the game now. Working their machinations from the darkest shadows in the subtlest of manners. They work today, hoping to overcome their foes without disturbing their sleeping Sires, or Caine himself.

Yes it does seem very ar chaic, that I will grant you, but you must remember the Vampire is a beast of antiquity. They live so long, they do not know what to measure their life spans by. They outlive most they could call friend and witness the discovery and eventual abandonment of precepts of science, theology and philosophy. To remain sane, and I suspect most of all to remain civil with each other, they have established Traditions and customs to structure certain aspects of their lives.

In the Dark Ages, while the Elders hid, the Anarchs would feed off the sick and the dying, the ones who would not be of this world for much longer anyway. They were scavengers more than they were hunters. Tales and superstitions grew

up about their midnight wanderings. This is perhaps why the Inquisition arose.

But with the coming of the new age, where anonymity was permitted and encouraged, they gave up on such practices. They could travel about, and could strike out at victims and then depart. Assisting in this transformation of our lives was their increasing understanding of our powers. Though the young ones today have less potential power, they have a greater mastery of it in the beginning. For them, the path to power and survival is not as difficult. Perhaps that is why they do not value it as much, and why they scorn the contrivings of the Jyhad.

Much has been said of the Kindred and their ways. The Kindred as described, however, are uniquely Western in thought, appearance and action. There are others, creatures of the Eastern lands, of China, Indochina, Japan, and other places, who are in some ways similar to the Kindred we know, but in many ways different.

Many theories abound as to the source of these differences. Some suggest that perhaps they are descended from a different Sire, from some master other than Caine. Others put forth that they are different beings altogether, like the shape-changers. No one knows, and no one who has gone searching for the truth has ever returned.

That's right, ever.

Whatever their true origin, it is apparent they have a stronger supernatural nature than the Kindred. Though certainly beyond the mortal plane, the Kindred are physical beings with physical limitations. The creatures of the East seem less so.

There is a fear, a great fear I've been told, among certain of the Elders that those of the East are ancient players in the Jyhad. They could be descended from the Progeny of Caine who fled East to escape his wrath.

I do not know, but time may tell.

There, I have told you as much as I dare. There is more to be told, but that will have to wait for another time, another place. I have risked us both too greatly already.

But how eager you seem, how you desire to hear more.

Ah, of course, what am I?

I am cursed, and I am damned, though I am now mortal. I am but a pawn, nothing more.

I have lived an undeath for over two millennium, but only now have I found peace. Redemption at last.

These last twelve years have been ones of great beauty and pleasure. I have rediscovered my love for flavored ices, a friendly smile, the sun on my cheeks and yes, love, mortal love. What a gift it has been, what a transformation.

I do not know how I was able to survive all those centuries. Yet because of these last twelve years, it was worth every second of agony. If only Yoreador had not seen me that day, if only her teeth had never touched my neck.

But enough for an old man's muttered recollections.

Do you wish to hear more?

You seem agitated?

What is wrong?

Have you heard something?

Yes! Outside!

Wait! What are you...

End Transcript <<09:32:14>>

Copy to File XS-78092 <duplicate>

Routing Order—

Transmit priority AA3

Director's Eyes Only

Reference 72-AG-156

Transcript Sealed by Order of the National Security Agency, Special Agent William Shepard, overseeing.

Last Words

It is not often that one has the opportunity to sum up and in some way make sense of a whole period of one's life. Author postscripts are one of the better side benefits of this ignoble craft of writing. Though I fear I may bore you with these musings of a lonely writer, I persevere in the sure knowledge that I've damn well earned it.

What you have in your hands now is the result of nearly a year of naked obsession. I am inordinately proud of it, overly convinced of its artistic worth. It is not an artistic masterpiece (though I often imagined it as such) but neither is it devoid of greater meaning. It is, to be sure, only a game, and can be judged only on those grounds.

Game design is a strange business, having something in common with both science and art. You attempt to describe reality through the game mechanics, yet you also seek to produce a work with qualities of beauty and relevance. However, it would be pretentious to create a game primarily on those grounds. Game design is mostly concerned with entertainment — the art and science come second.

However, I continue to imagine that the science and art of what I do somehow serves to make this game more significant, worthy of distinction, and that somehow it will help to change things in this ugly world of ours. I therefore present to you my case, the motives behind this labor, to reveal to you the power behind my obsession. What is this game?

Nature Red, In Tooth and Claw

Vampire was written in order to help discover the true nature of Evil. I have never been interested in the conventional, Old Testament concept of Good vs. Evil. Though I believe that there is such a thing as Evil, I do not believe it is anything so cut and dried. It certainly doesn't exist in simple dichotomy with good. I believe Evil is natural to the world, is intrinsic to the human condition, and that the recognition of Evil is, in fact, crucial to the attainment of happiness.

Evil is not the creation of Satan, nor is it the province of the monsters we have created in our imaginations. For eons, life has killed and been killed in order to sustain life. Evil was first revealed to us as the natural order of things. The logic of this is simple; that which hurts me is Evil, the attacker is Evil, and the cycle of life itself is Evil for it leaves me so vulnerable. Nature itself is Evil. Nature is unjust, sadistic, and immoral (but do not misunderstand what I say — nature is also beautiful beyond words).

We were created in an imperfect world, and as living elements of nature have been preprogramed to experience pain and horror. Evil is indelibly imprinted upon human psyche; it is the sum of all the bad memories, fears, lust and violence of all the millennias of human existence.

The murderous heart of the predator forms the root of our images of darkness and "Evil." Most human Evil is a distortion of the territorality, natural aggression and herd programing built into our subconscious. Unharnessed aggression leads to war and unchecked herd obedience leads to Inquisition. Every human Evil, such as rape, war and slavery, has its counterpart in the animal world.

We are half-angel and half-demon. Our reasoning capacity and self awareness put us on a practically divine level, yet our animal bodies and biological needs put us on a level equal to that of the greatest Evil we know.

When we achieve a measure of goodness we are rising above a natural state, not returning to it. Morality is a difficult and treacherous process, for it involves combating the Evil within, the Beast within.

This Evil is Freud's Id and Jung's Shadow; it is the source of troubling dreams and the cause of enormous dysfunction in our highly socialized culture where normal outlets for such unacceptable feelings have been sealed. Society teaches us to restrain our demons, to banish them to the recesses of our minds.

Modern culture provides so much security against our primal fears, against nature itself, that we have found ourselves cut off from our inner selves. The miraculous products of technology have eliminated the basic terrors of existence (of being eaten, for instance), but have done nothing, and indeed can do nothing, to eliminate our instinctual terror, our unconscious horror

and our inner demons. Each of us is trapped with a Beast we do not understand in a world that does not recognize the existence of Evil.

We must therefore hide from ourselves, for we cannot face the true face of reality. We hide by ignoring the Beast, by pretending it is not real, by expelling it completely from our lives, and by organizing and sanitizing everything we touch. In our day-to-day lives we have no way to identify with this Evil. We are so removed from it we are emaciated and shrunken. We have lost our Beast, and in so losing it, have released a yet greater monster upon ourselves—meaninglessness. When modern society destroyed the Beast, we lost our souls along with it.

We must learn not to expel the dark side, but to harness it instead. We must somehow come to terms with the Evil, accept it and understand it, and then, finally, overcome it. Fortunately we still have our ancient stories and legends and fears and all the fiction based upon them, and so we may search for our Beast and know its name.

You cannot reason with the dark side, it does not understand our world of logic and reason. It must be attacked in a different way. We must *become*, in order to *overcome*. Evil must be found, and lived, before it can be exorcised. Yet one cannot truly become Evil and remain moral.

As the dark side rises up out of the primordial chaos deep within our minds, we are likely to experience terror, rage, and frightening visions. These eruptions should not be avoided, but rather treated as a necessary part of one's spiritual evolution.

It is the quest of the hero to lead the fight in the eternal war against the Beast and the Evil it represents. Yet, archetypically, the hero must always discover the Evil within, before conquering it. One must first find one's internal weakness, moral rectitude, ignorance, and mortal frailty.

There will never be an end to our inner war, no matter what we achieve or attain. This is both our agony and our hope. Each of us possesses our personal demons, and exists in a most private hell. We must forever confront this reality in our journey towards redemption.

It is my desire that this game will assist you in doing just that.

It is the power behind the obsession.

Hiding Your Sources

great number of people have contributed to this effort, and they are listed in the credits of this book. I honor you all. Without your assistance this book, would not exist — in any form whatsoever. The efforts and creativity of many created this game, as no one person could ever create anything of this depth and scale. Each of us takes the ideas of others, and then passes them along, transformed perhaps, but the chain is always unbroken. We may evolve the idea, concept, or seed, but we can never claim sole ownership.

What we call creativity is actually evolution. Creativity is hiding your sources. However, if you are creative enough in hiding your sources, you can reveal them openly, for they will no longer be recognized. That is the real achievement, the actual creativity.

I urge you to take the seeds of what has been described in the book, and evolve from it your own reality, stories, and passion plays. Become part of an unbroken chain, traced back to Caine and beyond.

In order to honor those who gave so much to this work, I have included a list of works that have especially influenced this one — try to discern what of them exists in this book.

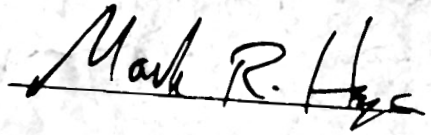
Novels The Vampire Chronicles, Ann Rice (read all three books) • Dracula, Bram Stoker • Those Who Haunt the Night, Barbra Hambly • Sandman (a graphic novel) • Time Enough For Love, Robert Heinlein

Movies: Near Dark • Vamp • The Hunger • Nosferatu (the original silent Movie) • Dracula (the orginal talkie) • Blue Velvet • Rear Window • Lost Boys • Alien • Aliens

Games: Ars Magica • Runequest • Shadowrun • Call of Cthulhu • Pendragon • Gurps Horror • Corps • Illuminati • Dungeons and Dragons

Other: Everything written by Carl Jung, Joseph Campbell, Milan Kundera, Herman Hesse, Albert Camus, P.B. Shelly, Mercea Eliade, Ayn Rand & (of course) Vaclav Havel.

PAX!



VAMPIRE™

Name: **Nature:** **Generation:**
Player: **Demeanor:** **Haven:**
Chronicle: **Clan:** **Concept:**

Attributes

Physical
Strength_____●OOOO
Dexterity_____●OOOO
Stamina_____●OOOO

Social
Charisma_____●OOOO
Manipulation_____●OOOO
Appearance_____●OOOO

Mental
Perception_____●OOOO
Intelligence_____●OOOO
Wits_____●OOOO

Abilities

Talents
Acting_____OOOOO
Alertness_____OOOOO
Athletics_____OOOOO
Brawl_____OOOOO
Dodge_____OOOOO
Empathy_____OOOOO
Intimidation_____OOOOO
Leadership_____OOOOO
Streetwise_____OOOOO
Subterfuge_____OOOOO

Skills
Animal Ken_____OOOOO
Drive_____OOOOO
Etiquette_____OOOOO
Firearms_____OOOOO
Melee_____OOOOO
Music_____OOOOO
Repair_____OOOOO
Security_____OOOOO
Stealth_____OOOOO
Survival_____OOOOO

Knowledge
Bureaucracy_____OOOOO
Computer_____OOOOO
Finance_____OOOOO
Investigation_____OOOOO
Law_____OOOOO
Linguistics_____OOOOO
Medicine_____OOOOO
Occult_____OOOOO
Politics_____OOOOO
Science_____OOOOO

Advantages

Disciplines
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Backgrounds
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Virtues
Conscience_____●OOOO

Self-Control_____●OOOO

Courage_____●OOOO

Other Traits:
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO
_____ OOOOO

Combat

Weapon	Difficulty	Damage

Humanity
O O O O O O O O O O

Willpower
O O O O O O O O O O

☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Blood Pool
O O O O O O O O O O

Health
Bruised ☐
Hurt -1 ☐
Injured -2 ☐
Wounded -3 ☐
Mauled -4 ☐
Crippled -5 ☐
Incapacitated ☐

Experience

Attributes: 7/5/3 Abilities: 13/9/5 Disciplines: 3 Backgrounds: 5 Virtues: 7 Freebie Points: 15 (7/5/2/1)

Index

A

Abilities
  Choosing 47
  Specialties 67
Action Scenes 139
Action Turn 139
Actions 31
  Extended 36, 38
  Resisted 37, 38
  Simple 31, 38
Advantages 48
Allies. *See* Background
Anatomia Vampirica 11
Animalism 91. *See also* Disciplines
Antagonists 186
  Ghouls 191
  Government 187
  Government Agent 187
  Lupines 192
  Magi, the 193
  Minister 190
  Police Detective 187
  Police Officer 187
  Scholar 190
  SWAT Officer 188
  Vampires 191
    Ancilla 191
    Antediluvian 191
    Elder 191
    Methuselah 191
    Neonate 191
  Witch-hunter 190
Appearance 51
Arcanum, the 190
Archetypes 45, 77
  Architect 77
  Bon Vivant 77
  Bravo 77
  Caregiver 78
  Cavalier 78
  Child 78
  Conformist 78
  Conniver 78
  Curmudgeon 79
  Deviant 79
  Director 79
  Examples of 45
  Fanatic 79
  Gallant 79
  Jester 79
  Judge 79
  Loner 80
  Martyr 80
  Plotter 80
  Rebel 80
  Survivor 80
  Traditionalist 80
  Visionary 80
Armor Rating Table 152
Attributes 39
  Choosing 45
  Mental 82
  Physical 81
  Social 81
  Specialties 67
Auspex 93. *See also* Disciplines: Auspex

B

Background 48, 105
  Allies 49, 105
  Contacts 49, 51, 106
  Fame 49, 106
  Generation 49, 106
  Herd 49, 106
  Influence 49, 106
  Mentor 49, 106
  Resources 49, 107
  Retainers 49, 51, 107
  Status 49, 107
Becoming, the 25
Blood 39
Blood Bond 134
Blood Hunt 176
Blood Pool 39, 50, 110, 117
  Gaining 117
  using 110
Blood Pool Source Chart 118
Bloodlines 178. *See* also, Clans.
Blood Bond
  Creation of 134
  Power of 134
Botch 39
Bravo. *See* Archetypes: Bravo
Brujah. *See* Clans

C

Caitiff. *See* Clans
Camarilla 180
Caregiver. *See* Archetypes
Cavalier. *See* Archetypes
Celerity 96. *See* also, Disciplines.
Change 10
Character Concept 43
Character creation, example of 52
Character Creation Outline 42
Characters 22, 39
  Non-player 212
    Alexander Danov 220
    Allicia 216
    Annabelle 252
    Detective Gregory Stephens 224
    Evelyn Stephens 219
    Juggler 217
    Lucian 221
    Michael 218
    Modius 215
    Special Agent William Shepard 224
    Sullivan Dane 222
Child. *See* Archetypes
Childer 8
Chronicle 31, 55
  Antagonists 203
  Beginning a 201
  Characters 203
  Concepts 205
    Bizarre 209
    Classic 205
    Historical 209
    Other World 210
    Roleplaying 207
  Elements of 202
  Example 210
  Motif 204
  Name 202
  Plan 204
Clans 44, 67, 178
  Brujah 44, 68, 179
  Caitiff 44, 180
  Gangrel 44, 69, 179
  Malkavian 44, 70, 179
  Nosferatu 44, 71, 179
  Other Clans 180
  Toreador 44, 72, 179
  Tremere 44, 74, 179
  Ventrue 44, 75, 180
Combat
  Complications
    Aiming 152
    Ambush 151
    Body Armor 152
    Cover 149
    Dodge 149, 151
    Immobilization 149
    More Than One Target 151
    Multiple Shots 151
    Subdual 149
    Three Round Burst 151
    Two Weapons 151
    Unjamming gun 152
  Cover Difficulty Chart 150
  Example of 147
  Firearms
    Armor Rating Table 152
  Firefight 149
  Hand-to-Hand 147
    Grapple 148
    Strike 148
    Throw 148
  Weapons Chart 150
Complications 36
Concepts
  Examples of 43
Contacts. *See* Background
Course of the Prelude. *See* Prelude

D

Damned, the 6
Demeanor 39, 44, 115
Derangements 125
  Madness 12, 127
    Blood Frenzy 127
    Fantasy 127
    Gambling 127
    Identification 127
    Multiple Peraonalities 127
    Perfection 127
    Procrastination 127
    Regression 127
    Whiner 127
  Overcoming 126

Rage 127
Arrogance 127
Cynicism 128
Innocence 128
Moralistic 128
Obsession 128
Overcompensation 128
Power Mad 128
Total Restraint 128
Vengeance 128
Roleplaying 126
Terror 128
Amnesia 129
Catatonia 129
Delusion of Grandeur 129
Depression 129
Fear of Death 128
Fear of Fear 129
Fear of Vampires 128
Intellectualization 129
Paranoia 129
Diablerie 14, 133
Dice Pool 39
Difficulties 32
Difficulty Factor 39
Discipline
Animalism 91
Fortitude 98
Obfuscate 98
Potence 99
Presence 99
Protean 101
Thaumaturgy 102
Paths 103
Rituals 103
Disciplines 39, 90
Animalism 48
Auspex 48
Celerity 48
Examples of 48
Obfuscate 48
Potence 48
Protean 48
Raising 115
Thaumaturgy 48
Dominate 96. *See also* Discipline
Down Time 39

E

Embrace 135
Equipment 51
Example Chronicle 210
Example of Play 159
Experience 113
Awarding Points 114
Backgrounds 115
Spending points 114
Extended Actions. *See* Actions

F

Fame. *See* Background
Forgery Chart 158
Fortitude 98. *See* Disciplines
Freebie Points 50
Frenzy 121
Duration 124
Example of 124
Precipitating Factors 121
Provoking 124
Reactions to 122
Resisted 122
Roleplaying and 123
Unresisted 122
Virtues and, 122

G

Gallant. *See* Archetypes
Game Terms
Words used by the players 38
Gangrel. *See* Clans
Gary, Indiana 212
Generations 49, 184
Caine 184
Eleventh - Thirteenth 186
Fourth and Fifth Generations 185
Ninth - Tenth 186
Second Generation 185
Sixth, Seventh and Eighth Generations 186
Third Generation 185
Getting Started 41
Ghouls 135. *See also* Antagonists
Golconda 131
Benefits of 132
Quest for, 131
Suspire and 132
Gothic-Punk 167

H

Haven 51
Health 39, 110
Health Levels 111
Herd 49
Humanity 39, 50, 108, 129
Gaining 131
Hierarchy of Sins 130
Roleplaying It 130
Rolling Against 129
Using 109
Wamings 130
Hunger, the 12, 25

I

Influence 49
Initiative
Rolling for 140
Injury 118
Aggravated Wounds 119
Falling Damage CHart 120
Final Death 119
Fire Damage Chart 120
Healing 119
Mortal Death 119
Sources of, 120
Sunlight Damage Chart 121
Torpor 119
Inquisition, the 188
Crosses 189

J

Jester. *See* Archetypes
Judge. *See* Archetypes

K

Knowledge 88
Knowledges
Bureaucracy 88
Computer 88
Finance 88
Investigation 89
Law 89
Linguistics 89
Medicine 89
Occult 89
Other 90
Politics 89
Science 90

L

Last Plea 15
Last Touches 50
Lexicon 193
Common Parlance 193–195
Old Form 195–197
Vulgar Argot 197–199
Live-Action 24, 236
Atmosphere 237
Props 237
Rules 236
Loner. *See* Archetypes
Looking Ahead 55
Lupines 192. *See also* Antagonists: Lupines

M

Madness. *See* Derangement: Madness
Magi 193. *See also* Antagonists
Malkavian. *See* Clans
Martyr. *See* Archetypes
Masquerade, the 7
Mentor. *See* Background
Motivations 51

N

Nature 39, 44, 116
Nature of the Beast 25
Nature of Vampires 8
Nosferatu. *See* Clans

O

Obfuscate 98. *See* Discipline
Oration Chart 155
Origins of the Kindred 6

P

Performance Chart 156
Periods of Time 31
Personality 115

Players, the 21
Playing Aids 23
Plotter. *See* Archetypes
"Point Pool" Costs 50
Politics
  The Prince 172
Potence 99. *See* Disciplines
Prelude 56
  Course of 57
  Stages of 57
Prelude, example of 61
Presence 99. *See* Disciplines
Primogen 172
Prince, the 170
  Politics and 172
  Selection of 170
Princedom
  Advantages of 172
Protean 101. *See* Disciplines

Q

Quirks 51

R

Ratings 32, 39
Reasons to play 231
Rebel. *See* Archetypes
Rebirth 132
Resisted Action. *See* Actions
Resources. *See* Background
Retainers. *See* Background
Roleplaying 20
Roleplaying Derangement 126. *See also* Derangement: Roleplaying
Rolls
  Simple 141
Rule of One 33

S

Scenes 31, 39, 137
  Action 139
Sects 180
  Camarilla 180
  Conclave 180
  Inconnu, the 183
  Inner Circle 181
  Justicar 182
  Sabbat, the 183
Seduction
  Conversation 154
  Intimacies 154
  Opening-line 154
  Witty exchange 154
Setting 202
Simple Action. *See* Actions
Simple Rolls 141. *See also* Die Rolls: Simple
Sire 52
Skills 86
  Animal Ken 86
  Drive 86
  Etiquete 86
  Firearms 86
  Melee 87
  Music 87
  Other 88
  Repair 87
  Security 87
  Stealth 87
  Survival 87
Spark of Life 50
Specialties 51
Stages of the Prelude. *See* Prelude
Status. *See* Background
Stealing
  Cat-burglar 153
  Holdup 153
  Pickpocket 153
  Shoplift 153
Story 31
Story Concepts 243–245
Storyteller 20, 39, 227
  Breaking the Rules 229
  Problems 229
  Role of 227
  Rules and 229
Storytelling 20, 231
  Advanced 234
  Art of 231
  Conflict 238
  Creating a Story 237
  Drama 241
  Dream Sequence 235
  Example Story 245
  Flashbacks 234
  Foreshadowing 234
  Mood 241
  Parallel Story: 234
  Plot 240
  Story Concepts 242
  Suspense 232
  Symbolism 235
  Theme 238
Survivor 45
Suspire 132
Systems 39, 143
  Mental
    Composition 157
    Cryptology 158
    Forgery 157
    Recollection 157
    Research 156
    Safecracking 159
    Search 158
    Track 157
  Physical 143
    Awakenings 143
    Climbing 143
    Feats of Strength 145
    Hand-to-Hand Combat 147
    Hunt, the 144
    Jumping 144
    Melee Resolution Chart 148
    Pursuit 152
    Repair 145
    Shadowing 145
    Sneak 145
    Stealing 153
    Stunt Driving 152
    Swimming 147
    Vehicle Manuverability Table 152
  Social
    Credibility 155
    Facedown 155
    Fast Talk 154
    Fitting In 154
    Interrogation 155
    Oration 155
    Oration Chart 155
    Performance Chart 156
    Performances 156
    Seduction 153

T

Talents 83
  Acting 83
  Alertness 84
  Atheletics 84
  Brawl 84
  Dodge 84
  Empathy 85
  Intimidation 85
  Leadership 85
  Other 86
  Streetwise 85
  Subterfuge 85
Teamwork 37
Thaumaturgy 102. *See* Disciplines
The Embrace 135
Time 12
Toreador. *See* Clans
Torpor 119
Torpor Chart 119
Traditionalist. *See* Archetypes
Traditions 173
  Acceptance 174
  Accounting 175
  Becoming 175
  Destruction 176
  Domain 174
  Secrecy 175
Trait Cost Chart 114
Traits 39
Tremere. *See* Clans
Troupe 39
Try it Out 38
Turn
  Action
    Options for 140
    Organizing a 139
Turns 31, 138
  Multiple Actions in a 138
  Taking Actions in 140

V

Vampire society 23
Vampires. *See* The Damned: Origins of the Kindred: The Masquerade
  Class System 169
    Anarchs 169
    Ancilla 169
    Antediluvian 170
    Caitiff 169
    Childe 169
    Elders 169

Methuselah 169
Neonate 169
Prince 170
Generations of 184. *See also* Generations
Misconceptions about 27
Population 168
Powers 26
Weaknesses 26
Vehicle Manuverability Table 152
Ventrue. *See* Clans
Virtues 49, 108
Conscience 108
Courage 108
Frenzy and, 122
Self-Control 108
Visionary. *See* Archetypes
Vita Sub Tenebras 13

W

Weapons Chart 150
Willpower 39, 50, 109, 116
Gaining permanently 116
Losing permanently 117
Recovering 116
Temporary Changes 116
Using 109
Winner and Losers 22

Upcoming Vampire Products

• Ashes to Ashes™ WW2102

This continuation of the Chronicle from the **Vampire** storytelling game propels the characters into even deeper dangers. The Prince of Chicago has disappeared and the characters are the obvious culprits.

• Storyteller's Screen WW2001

This Storyteller's screen for Vampire comes complete with all the charts you need to play the game and includes a 16-page mini-adventure, "Blood at Dawn."

• Chicago by Night™ WW2201

A Chicago sourcebook detailing the setting of this huge city in terms of Vampires. Who is the Prince, which nightclubs are the hot spots, and what goes on at the Metropolitan Museum of Art at night? Essential if you intend to do any roleplaying in or around Chicago.

• Blood Bond™ WW2103

A 32-page story supplement concerning the strongest of ties between the Damned — the Blood Bond. Who among you is controlled?

• The Succubus Club™ WW2104

An anthology of six stories (adventures), each of them based around the nightclub known as the Succubus Club—one of the premier hangouts for the Anarchs of Chicago. Extensive details of the club are provided.

• Alien Hunger™ WW2105

This 64-page supplement is our first placed in a setting other than Chicago. The characters must learn to the survive the Diablery in Colorado.

• The Players Guide™ WW2204

This comprehensive supplement includes all the information a player of Vampire requires. Virtues and Flaws, new Traits, Disciplines from 6-10, expanded descriptions of the Clans (plus several new Clans), a LifePath section for going solo through the Prelude, and advice on roleplaying and surviving in the world of the Damned.

• A World of Darkness™ WW2300

A description of our world, only with Vampires added. The voodoo cults that worship Vampires, Hunedoara Castle, the Vampire Club in San Francisco, the lairs of the Ancients, and all the rest are detailed within. Contains a wealth of information on the world of Vampires, providing enough to allow a Chronicle to take the characters around the world.

• The Hunters Hunted™ WW2203

The enemies of Vampires and their resources. A complete catalogue of all those who seek to kill or control the Vampires. Includes rules for roleplaying these Vampire hunters.

• Storyteller's Handbook™ WW2200

The Storyteller's Handbook is full of advice and information to help you run your Vampire Chronicle. A cornucopia of rules and background, designed for exclusive use by the Storyteller. Use the new rules you like, and ignore all the rest.

• Who's Who among Vampires™ WW2301

A complete catalogue of Vampires from around the world who are either powerful or have significant influence in the community of Vampires. One page is included for each Vampire, with a full page illustration of them on the opposite page.

Vampire is only the first of five games in the Storyteller™ game system, all of them based on the same mystical version of our own world, each of them a modern fable. The others are: Werewolf™, Magus™, Faerie™, and Ghost™. Because of their compatibility, it is simple to use one with the other, and together they create one all-encompassing game system.

A Storytelling Game of Personal Horror

"No one holds command over me. No man. No god. No Prince. What is a claim of age for ones who are immortal? What is a claim of power for ones who defy death? Call your damnable hunt. We shall see who I drag screaming to hell with me."

— Günter Dörn, *Das Ungeheuer Darin*

WHITE WOLF
A Renaissance in Games